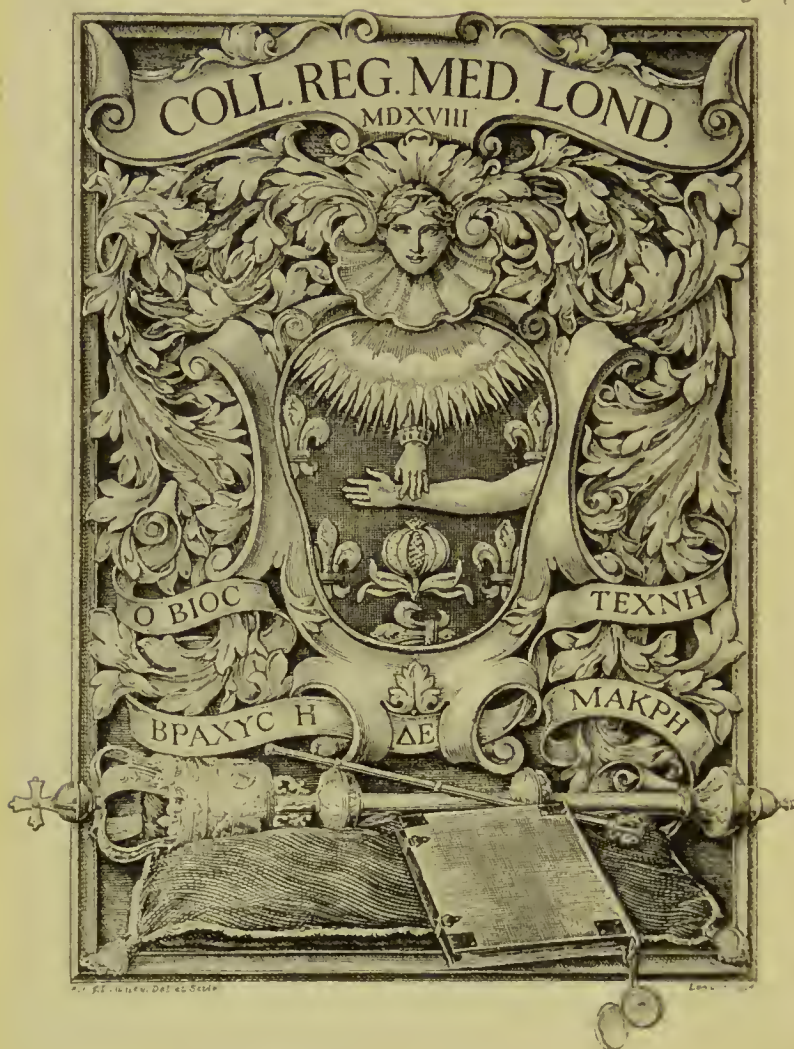






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# A DAY WITH CROMWELL.

A DRAMA OF HISTORY

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

AUCTOR.

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# A DAY WITH CROMWELL.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HIS HIGHNESS OLIVER CROMWELL . . . . .	<i>Lord Protector of the Commonwealth.</i>
SMITE-'EM-ON-THE-CHEEK COLMAN . . . . .	<i>An Ironside.</i>
JOSHUA BUCKTHORN . . . . .	<i>Chamberlain to the Protector.</i>
CHARLES HARFLEUR . . . . .	<i>A Cavalier in Love.</i>
THE DUKE DE TOURS . . . . .	} <i>Cavaliers in Disguise.</i>
LEONINE . . . . .	
JOHN MILTON . . . . .	<i>Latin Secretary to the Protector.</i>
HERBERT LEE . . . . .	<i>A favorite Page in Waiting.</i>
JOHN THURLOE . . . . .	<i>Secretary to the Protector.</i>
LORD BROGHILL . . . . .	<i>A Courtier and Politician.</i>
DR. GOODWIN . . . . .	<i>Chaplain to the Protector.</i>
JEREMY WHITE . . . . .	<i>A Chaplain and "a Top Wit at Court."</i>
SIR THOMAS WIDDRINGTON . . . . .	<i>Speaker of the House of Commons.</i>
THOMAS BETTERTON . . . . .	<i>A Tragedian.</i>
ISHMAEL GREAVES . . . . .	<i>A Gun-Maker of Broomyeham.</i>
SIR RICHARD WILLIS . . . . .	<i>A Spy.</i>
MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL . . . . .	<i>A Chief Rabbi.</i>
PASQUA . . . . .	<i>A Greek Coffee Merchant.</i>
JOHN BUNYAN . . . . .	<i>A Tinker and Preacher.</i>
CAPTAIN GREATOREX . . . . .	<i>A Captain of the Guard.</i>
SAMUEL MORLAND . . . . .	<i>Clerk to Secretary Thurloe.</i>
FIRST MUSICIAN . . . . .	
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS . . . . .	
MESSANGER . . . . .	
LADY RACHEL LANE . . . . .	<i>A Prophetess.</i>
LADY ELIZABETH CLAYPOLE . . . . .	} <i>Daughters of the Protector.</i>
LADY FRANCES CROMWELL . . . . .	
NORA . . . . .	<i>Lady Companion to Lady Claypole.</i>
DEBORAH STANDUPRIGHT . . . . .	<i>Companion to Lady Frances.</i>
MRS. BUCKTHORN . . . . .	<i>Wife of the Chamberlain.</i>
MARGERY BEACHAMP . . . . .	<i>A Mariner's Wife.</i>

*Officers, Guards Members of Parliament, Musicians, Courtiers,  
and People.*

*Time - 24 hours. May - 1657  
Place - Palace of Whitehall  
LONDON - at the Theatre*

1600 for a part  
that Geo. Henry has  
read play and seen  
Paul of Santa Anna  
would suit him  
"Amichangly."

## A DAY WITH CROMWELL.

—o—

### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.—A GATEWAY AT WHITEHALL.

*Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman, an Ironside, on guard.*

*Smite'em.*—When a man hath no better smiting it behoveth him to rend the air.

[*Sings*] Like men of might  
So let us smite  
Our enemies, and blight;  
Yea, blight them all that fight.

When a man can let no light into any other man it behoveth him to enlighten himself. I will even read my instructions. [*Takes a scrip out of his cap and reads.*] “Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman; stand thou as sentry at the western gate from six of the morn until nine of the morn, and let none pass without the word. And know thou that the word for a man is Jezebel, and for a woman Sennacherib.

“Jedediah Greatorrex,

“Captain of the Guard to the Person.”

I wonder who the person is? Noll, I suppose, a new name for Noll Cromwell of St. Ives, I make asseveration. I hate that! After all he is a person, but why not say *a* person instead of *the* person. I'll ask John Bunyan the odds of a's and the's. Bang! but hold—there cometh one in scarlet having the eyes of an unicorn and the skip of a she goat on the mountains of Beulah.



[Enter Nora, who moves to pass through the gate.]

*Smite'em* [interposing].—Stop! March! Bang!

*Nora*.—Oh dear me, soldier!

*Smite'em*.—Stop! March! I like that.

*Nora*.—I go, Sir, to gather flowers for my Lady Claypole; by order, Sir; by order, Sir.

*Smite'em*.—Damsel, the pass word.

*Nora*. [Aside].—I know this fellow, it's *Smite'em* the Ironside—a brave stern man—but odd withal; very odd; by honest repute a bachelor, and, afore he went to Ireland, in love with me. I'll tease him. [To *Smite'em*.]

Cat that kills a mouse on Sunday

Always should be hanged on Monday.

*Smite'em*.—Scarlet, 'tis not the pass. [Aside.] What gems of eyes. They would set Doubting Castle itself on fire. March! Bang!

*Nora*.—Oh dear, Mr. *Smite'em*, how you frighten me. I'll send you cider-cup, *Smite'em*, when you are off guard.

*Smite'em*.—Damsel, I will even taste thy cider-cup [aside.] I like that [to *Nora*].—for it be wholesome to the body though to the spirit rough; but thou goest not without the word Wilt thou hear one thing else?

*Nora*.—What is that, Mr. *Smite'em*?

*Smite'em*.—Damsel, I love thee. [Aside.] I've done it. [To *Nora*.] Wilt thou be my wedded wife, to have and to hold through the walley?

*Nora*.—No, Mr. *Smite'em*, I never will: oh! you horrible Mr. *Smite'em*, I'll tell my lady, I will: let me enter, Mr. *Smite'em*, or I'll call out the word all the way. Jezebel! Jezebel! Jezebel!

*Smite'em* [letting her pass].—True, true! March! [Calls after her.] Maiden, one word more. Dost thou see this vest?

*Nora*.—I do, Mr. *Smite'em*.

*Smite'em*.—I rend it open.

*Nora*.—Mr. *Smite'em*, you will take cold.

*Smite'em*.—Woman, dost thou see this neckerchief?

*Nora*.—How can I help seeing it, Mr. *Smite'em*?

*Smite'em*.—I cast it to the winds.



*Nora*.—And leave thyself nothing to hang with—a good cowardly device, Mr. Smite'em. Ha, ha !

*Smite'em*.—Scarlet, see'st thou these nether habiliments ?

*Nora*.—Mr. Smite'em, are you a gentleman ?

*Smite'em*.—I loose them at the knees.

*Nora*.—That thou may'st excuse thyself thy prayers. Good Mr. Smite'em, thou would'st scare crows. Ha, ha ! thou scarest me ! Good bye !

*Smite'em*.—I register a wow, Scarlet—a wow ; that till thou changest thy pride and opinion, thus for ever will I attire. It's a wow. Maiden, can'st thou thus daily meet Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman ?

*Nora*.—Aye, aye, Mr. Smite'em, and laugh at thee too. [*Aside.*] I must be off when I have teased him once more. [*To Smite'em.*] Smite'em, what is the pass for a woman ? Oh, most vigilant sentinel ! Smite'em, in love thou lovest thy head even quicker than thy heart. Good bye scarecrow, good bye ! Jezebel is the pass for a man, not for a woman ! Ha, ha ! Good bye ! Jezebel, Jezebel, Jezebel ! [*Exit Nora.*]

*Smite'em*.—Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman, fall on thy own sword. Thou art an exploded pop-gun. I hate that. Smite'em, my boy, reload. Heigh so ! here's another. Stay, it's Jezebel for a man. Reload thyself, Smite'em.

*Enter Charles Harfleur.*

*Smite'em*.—Who cometh here ?

*Charles*.—A friend.

*Smite'em*.—Give me the pass.

*Charles*.—Naphthali.

*Smite'em*.—Thou art even a sunset behind thy time.

*Charles* [*aside*].—Wrong again, wrong again. Well, it can't be helped. [*To Smite'em.*] Good bye, saint ! good bye ! [*Retires singing.*]

“ Good bye to the saints, may their heads all tarry  
As near to the skies as a pole will carry ;  
And their souls retire, and their souls retire,  
As low in the pit as there's height in the fire.”

*Smite'em*.—I hate that. I be beset with devils. Here cometh another.

*Enter Joshua Buckthorn.*

*Josh.*—Now there's a sentiment for a saint. I should know that voice:  
Mr. Colman, my friend, thy hand. I welcome thee.

*Smite'em.*—"Mr. Colman" I hate that—Sillikin, Sillikin, art thou a son of Belial?

*Josh.*—Son of Belial! no idiot, give me thy hand, Mr. Colman; surely thou knowest the Honourable Joshua Buckthorn?

*Smite'em.*—My nose forgetteth its cunning—[*tries to sneeze.*] Stand back Josh., stand back; turn round Josh., turn round; he's the same behind as before. I am not a man; I am a fool, a fool!

*Josh.*—Say not so, Mr. Colman, say not so: thou wert never a fool, nor more than I: and now thou art named in the one hundred of the guard to the person, and art to be officered too: and I am also promoted to great honour: I am his Highness's Chamberlain.

*Smite'em.*—Josh.! Josh.! thou art a hypocrite: but tell me, as thou art a Chamberline, is Noll Cromwell up?

*Josh.*—His Highness hath not yet risen.

*Smite'em.*—Then his early rising won't hurt him, Josh., if his long fasting don't. Go and tell him to get up at once, I want to talk to him.

*Josh.*—Impossible.

*Smite'em.*—My eyes don't see it, Joshua; why he once kicked me out of bed.

*Josh.*—And might now kick thee out of thy commission! What art thou musing upon, Mr. Colman?

*Smite'em.*—I was thinking, Josh. Buckthorn, thou art a hypocrite. What is that book thou carriest: be it for instruction, condition, condemnation, edification, pacification, or conversation?

*Josh.*—Thou did'st hit it at last, Mr. Colman, 'tis for conversation. 'Tis my note-book, look man. See on the cover—

"Joshua Buckthorn, his book;  
Heaven give him grace therein to look;  
Not to look but to understand,  
Larning's better nor house and land;  
When house and land is gone and spent,  
Then larning is most excellent."

*Smite'em.*—Well, Josh., considerin thou never had'st so much as a

cock-loft, nor ground enough for a hen-pen, I suppose in thy case them is right; howsomdever the larning may be. March!

*Josh.*—I could tell thee, Sir, all that has been since thou wentest to Ireland, from this book.

*Smite'em.*—And be there no lies in Josh.? I hate lies.

*Josh.*—None, on my sacred honour.

*Smite'em.*—I hate that.

*Josh.*—Hate honour, Mr. Colman?

*Smite'em.*—I do: 'tis a thing a *hypocrite* always covenanteth upon.

But never mind Josh., tell me the news, lies and all: I shall know the lies because I always know what I hate. March!

*Josh.*—I will give to thee the salientes. Thou knowest Cromwell be now the Lord Protector, and that I am the Honourable Joshua.

*Smite'em.*—I hate that!

*Josh.*—Thou must even like it, Mr. Colman; we both require the proper reverence.

*Smite'em.*—Bang! March.

*Josh.* [*Reads*]—(Mem.) February 10th. Rumours, that my Lord his Highness did and was seen to kiss my Lady Dysart. Rumour, that her Majesty Queen Christina of Sweden, lately abdicate, doth love his Highness and cometh to England. Rumour, that her Highness Elizabeth, the Protectress, do say the Queen shall not to court, which seemeth to me hard.

*Smite'em.*—Thou had'st better said *soft* Joshua.

*Josh.* [*Reads*]—(Mem.) Monday. My Lady Kate Cooper hath three children at one birth all alive, and with my lady doing well. Sweet babes! To be named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

*Smite'em.*—I like that; it partaketh of fire. Bang! March!

*Josh.* [*Reads*]—(Mem.) Tuesday. The Lady Rachel cometh to the court in armour, bearing shield and spear, flying like the wind and alarming the weak.

*Smite'em.*—I like that.

*Josh.*—Then doth Rachel prophecy and disturb his Highness by foresaying how near he shall come to the crown.

*Smite'em.*—The what!

*Josh.*—The crown, *Smite'em*; the crown for His Majesty Oliver the First.



*Smite'em.*—Hold hard Joshua Buckthorn! hold thyself by the hair of thine own thick skull! Do I stand sentinel for a Jackanapes? March, Chamberline, march!

*Josh.* [*Reads*].—(Mem.) Wednesday, 18th proximo, Rachel doth continue to keep his Highness in a fever: and anon raving for her son, who, she still persisteth is not dead. On this same day my Lord hath a fit as of ague.

*Smite'em.*—I hate that.

*Josh.* [*Reads*].—(Mem.) My Lord in dead of night walketh in the gardens talking alone; where my Lady Claypole following him is seized with the same malady which, say the Physicians, they could cure, if on such great persons they dare try a new physick of Peru.

*Smite'em.*—It's the crown, Josh.; it's the crown.

*Josh.* [*Reads*].—(Mem.) Saturday the 24th, come the French ambassadors: his Highness be more troubled, and there be rumours that his life be threatened.

*Smite'em.*—Truly my spirit is disturbed and requireth the maiden's cider-cup!

*Josh.*—Maiden, what maiden?

*Smite'em.*—A damsel of the house who did cross the entrance with a false sign.

*Josh.*—[*Proceeding to write in his book*] (Mem.) Monday the 8th of May, a maiden of the palace did cross the sentinel of the western gate with a false sign.

*Smite'em.*—If thou darest to write that down, Joshua Buckthorn, I will tear thy limbs asunder and scatter thee to the ravens of the plains of ——

*Josh.*—Nay, Smite'em, hold: I will strike it out, I will even rip it out: thou art a violent man, Smite'em!

*Enter Mrs. Buckthorn.*

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—Joshua Buckthorn! Honourable Joshua Buckthorn, there be a consultium in my Lord's Council, and an ordnance is demanded of you.

*Josh.*—I obey my Lord.

*Smite'em.*—What, mother Buckthorn, art thou too transmogrified? March! Bang! [*Mrs. Buckthorn becomes faint.*]

*Josh.*—Smite'em, thou art violent, thou frightenest her: the dew settleth on her brow. [*Supports her.*]

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—It's the cold Presbyterians, love: they creep all over me. I caught them in Scotland of His Highness' chaplain's chaplainess.

*Josh.*—To the palace, my life. Smite'em, thou art an honest man, and I forgive thee: the more so that thy office now is of His Highness's special will. Let none pass the gate, Smite'em. Farewell.

[*Exit Josh. and Mrs. Buckthorn.*]

*Smite'em.*—When last I see'd that she-butterfly, she were even washing lambs in the wash-pit at Huntingdon, and accepting joyfully their tails for her recompense. I'll have no she butterflies! I'll have no crown! I'll have no King Nollivers!

*Enter Rachel.*

*Rachel.*—Silence and read. [*Gives an order.*]

*Smite'em.* [*Reads.*]"His Highness commands thee. Fail not, but enter the palace. The bearer of this mine order releases thee thy charge. "Jedediah Greatorex."

My limbs are as a broken reed. Lady, the word.

*Rachel.*—Sennacherib.

*Smite'em.*—Dost thou take guard?

*Rachel.*—I do my duty; do thou thine.

*Smite'em.*—I like that. [*Aside.*] Beelzebub, what a swinger! [*Exit.*]

*Rachel.*—[*Mysteriously*]—Now shall it come to pass—

There shall be one to fall and one to rise.

Is it so near? Is it so near the end?

Hark! Hark! Treason! Treason! who said treason

While Rachel waits and watches? I must go.

Time presses. Who said time, and what is time?

It brings all earthly things, all griefs, all joys,

To urgent life and fact. It buries all.

In the whole universe naught is but time.

Yet hath it no existence, form, nor weight.

It is and is not: it was, it is, it goes!

I claim it substance, and a shadow fades.

I call it past all price, aye, price of gold,

Yet cannot buy nor sell it. I measure it,

*With glass song Rachel should  
be full, spare, hard, with quick  
restless action, not yet in the road*

Yet fills it up no measure. The wise men say,  
 Rachel is mad, for she doth live on thoughts  
 She cannot clothe in words. I turn, and ask  
 The wise men—What is time? They shake their heads,  
 But answer have they none. I laugh at them,  
 And then they venture to be wise, and say,  
 Poor Rachel, she is mad. Time, time, time.  
 Go to, thou, nothing everything. Go to,  
 Thou ruthless tyrant, and thou abject slave.  
 I bend to thee, and use thee to my bent.  
 I must away. [Exit.]

*Re-enter Charles Harfleur.*

*Charles.*—Now for a plunge into the lion's mouth for the lamb's lip.  
 There goes the weird woman after her dead son, and here go I  
 after a live woman. Shall I risk it? If they mistake me for  
 one of those Cavaliers said to be after old Noll, whom the  
 Devil hob-nob with soon, with intent to kill; then for a sharp  
 axe, and a short exit. If they don't mistake, then for a lovely  
 girl, and a long embrace. I'll take the chance. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A GARDEN IN WHITEHALL BEYOND THE GATEWAY.

THE LEFT WING OF THE PALACE IN THE DISTANCE.

*Enter Joshua Buckthorn with Cromwell following, unarmed.*

*Josh.*—This way, my Lord your Highness; this way, my Lord, this way.

*Cromwell.* [In rage.]—Tut, tut, tut; I tell thee, knave, I'll no more of it. It mattereth not what I may be doing, in will you with your babble and your scum; were I planning a siege it were the same.

*Josh.*—But my Lord, indeed, my Lord—

*Cromwell.*—Tut, my Lord, indeed my Lord. I tell thee, hog's flesh, I'll have no more of this; you give me not time to gird on my sword—tut, tut, tut.

*Josh.*—Well, my Lord, then I have only to say, that if Jeremy White doth succeed, the fault beeth not mine.

*Cromwell.*—Jeremy White! Jerry White! Stay, stay, sirrah. Be he not one of those who would dip his hands in my blood?

To compare men & women  
 he after the manner of Buckthorn



*Josh.*—Truly my Lord, 'tis otherwise rather wise; he would even mingle his blood with your Highness's. He would win the Lady Frances!

*Cromwell.*—Eh! eh! eh! I know, I know, I know! And thou hast caught them, hast thou, Joshua? Thou crafty old fox! I'll promote thee, Joshua, I'll promote thee, man; why thou should'st not be *Sir* Joshua, I know not. Thou'st caught them, hast thou?

*Josh.*—My Lord, for three morns running, hath Mr. Jeremy White thus walked in this retirement, book in hand, buried in Aristotle's, or some such grammars; and at the same time, my Lady and her maid, Deborah Standupright, with her bobtail dog (so called for her slender altitude) with her: and both these reading also. So passed they many times, my Lord, up and down, my Lord, and sighing thus [*imitates*]. See, see, my Lord, here come they; stand thou here, my Lord, and thou wilt see with thine own eyes, and still not be seen.

*Cromwell and Joshua retire.*

*Enter Jeremy White, walking and reading. Enter opposite, Lady Frances and Deborah, reading.*

*Jeremy.*—[*Passing, sighs deeply*].

*Francis.*—[*Passing, sighs softly*].

*Deborah.*—[*Following Frances, reads just audibly and contemptuously*].

"And then without a blush, quoth she,  
Were I a man, a man I'd be."

[*They recross the stage, and, at point of meeting a second time, Jeremy White kneels to Frances Cromwell.*]

*Jeremy.*—Lady, if I thus pleading might but hope,  
I'd live for ever on the hope, or die. [*Kisses her hand.*]

*Cromwell.* [*Coming forward with Josh.*—How now, how now, who talks about dying; rot! rot! rot! What, Mr. Jeremy White, I pri'thee, meaneth this? I take it, Sir Chaplain, thou wert better at thy prayers, considering how easy a thing it is to gape without a body on Temple Bar.

*Jeremy.*—May it please your Highness, I have a long time courted that young gentlewoman [*pointing to Deborah*] and cannot prevail. I was therefore praying her ladyship to intercede for me.

*Deborah.* [*Aside.*]—Oh Lord, Lord, what a lie!

*Cromwell.* [*To Josh. aside.*]—Hist man, into the palace and return instantly with Parson Goodwin, thy own wife, and a wedding ring. I see here a marriage settlement.

*Josh.*—But the ring, my Lord,

*Cromwell.*—Borrow mother Buckthorn's, an'. thou must: away! [*To Jeremy.*]—Come hither, Jeremy White, come hither.

Jeremy, Jeremy, my friend, my friend, thou surprisest me. Thou rankest as "a top wit of the court," could'st thou not win her by thy address?

*Jeremy.*—No, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Jeremy, thou art a learned man; could'st thou not win her by thy wisdom?

*Jeremy.*—No, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Jeremy, thou art an eloquent preacher; I have heard thee discourse, and have been edified thereby; could'st thou not win her with thy speech?

*Jeremy.*—No, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Poor Jeremy! Jeremy, shall I try for thee?

*Jeremy.*—Good, my Lord, if ——

*Cromwell.*—Nay, Jeremy, say not if. I am thy friend, Jeremy. I will do it. [*To Deborah.*]—How now, hussey, why do you refuse the honour Mr. White would do you? He is my particular friend, and I expect you shall treat him as such.

*Deborah*—[*curtseying.*]—If Mr. White intends me this honour I shall not be against him.

*Cromwell.*—Sayest thou so, my lass, then shall it soon be done.

*Jeremy.*—[*Aside.*]—Oh! Oh! Oh! Truly, and lying doth bring no recompense. I must even yet try to escape.

*Enter Chaplain Goodwin, Mrs. Buckthorn, and Josh.*

*Cromwell.* [*To Goodwin.*]—Reverend Sir, I beseech you in holy matrimony bind together these two young hearts: bind them even now and for good.

*Jeremy.*—My Lord, an' 'twould please your Highness, were it not better done in a Church?

*Cromwell.*—What holier place than this encircling dome,  
Beyond whose spangled and ethereal walls  
Dwells the Eternal, and where all is heaven?

Hither the fathers of our race were wont  
 To bend in grace and love, and hither they  
 Who raised our gorgeous temples, came to learn  
 In mimic art, the art of the Divine.  
 Be this the Church; the altar-piece the earth;  
 The arch the sky; the fretted work the stars;  
 The music harmony, the songs of birds;  
 The incense odorous, the sweet perfume  
 Of violet, of jessamine, and rose.  
 This, consecrated by the Great High Priest,  
 Once and for ever by his sovereign will  
 Is here your church, nor king of all the earth  
 Could ask for more, or, asking, more obtain.  
 Go on, the church will do.

*Jeremy.* [*Aside.*].—(That shuts up the church. [*To Cromwell.*].—My Lord, your Highness' eloquence doth surely satisfy; but perchance some obstacle of law might negative this expedition.

*Cromwell.*—Fear not Jeremy, I am the law. Proceed.

*Jeremy.*—That shuts up the law.

*Goodwin.*—Jeremiah White, dost thou thy troth? Dost thou take this woman to be thy wedded wife, to have and to hold till death do you part?

*Cromwell* [*prompting Jeremy*].—I do.

*Jeremy.*—I do.

*Goodwin.*—Deborah Standupright, dost thou take this man to be thy wedded husband, to have and to hold until death do you part?

*Mrs. Buckthorn* [*to Deborah*].—Take courage, dear; take courage, dear; the nobbly part will soon be over; say it quick, dear.  
 "I do."

*Deborah.*—I do.

*Goodwin.*—Who giveth this woman to be married unto this man?

*Josh.*—By his Highness' favour I offer them my services and my blessings. [*Josh. joins their hands.*]

*Jeremy.*—May it please your Highness, in the haste of these dispositions, it hath befallen me to have no ring.

*Cromwell.*—Truly we should thank Providence that doth put so strange a requisite in our poor possession at so fortunate a moment: with the which we right gladly possess thee.



*Jeremy [Aside].*—That shuts up the ring.

*Goodwin and Jeremy.*—With this ring I thee wed.

*Cromwell.*—Amen!

*Goodwin.*—Jeremy White and Deborah, of that name, I declare you, in the face of this congregation, to be man and wife, lawfully united in the holy estate of matrimony.

*Cromwell.*—So may it be! And now good Mrs. White I give thee five hundred pounds to thy dowry. Frances Cromwell, to your room? Goodwin, I pray you see our friends provided with due ceremony, and anon I will drink to the bride.

[*Exit all save Cromwell and Josh.*]

*Cromwell.*—That's done. Joshua Buckthorn, didst thou see how happy they were?

*Josh.*—I did, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Dost thou think they will fight, Joshua?

*Josh.*—I do, my Lord

*Cromwell.*—That's not our business.

*Josh.*—No, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Josh., Josh., I'll stick to thee as my skin sticks to my flesh. And now, thou newsmongering grasshopper, what in the Court this morning awaits the day?

*Josh.* [*Referring to his book*].—My Lord, there be many do pray audience of your Highness: they say fourteen days have they waited your Highness' pleasure, and indeed they be urgent.

*Cromwell.*—Who be they, who be they, and what their business?

*Josh.*—My Lord, there be inventors, importers of new beverages; play actors from Mr. Waller, your Highness' cousin, Jews from Amsterdam, a Barbary horse from Barbary rightway; Smite-'em-on-the-cheek Colman:—

*Cromwell.* [*Testily*].—Aye! aye! What other news be there?

*Josh* —But one more item, my Lord, 'tis that two Frenchmen of illustrious quality, called the Duke de Tours, and a junior member of the house of Leonine, arrive in London.

*Cromwell.*—The House of Leonine I know. 'Twas the head of that house went on embassy to Madrid; but the Duke de Tours; 'tis strange I have never heard of the Duke de Tours. [*Takes out a small book.*] 'Tis not on the list of the nobility of France.

*Josh.*—May be, my Lord, 'tis like mine, even a new title ; titles change fast in these times.

*Cromwell.*—Truly, batter brains, thou cans't speak sometimes even above thy vanity ! It may be so ; but what credentials have they ? Does our ambassador Lockhart commend them ?

*Josh.*—I know not, my Lord, the secrets of Master Lockhart, for to me doth he show an unbecoming silence ; but last evening his Excellency the Duke did honour me with a request to his hostel ; when, speaking mightily of your Highness, he did intimate that he was from his Eminence the Cardinal Mazarin from whom he did bring this despatch. [*Hands paper.*]

*Cromwell.*—[*Takes despatch, opens and reads.*]

*Highness.*—This to bring to your Highness the Duke de Tours and M. de Leonine the younger. Their mission is travel and pleasure, yet would they be proud to have your Highness's good opinion. [*Aside.*]—'Tis Mazarin's hand ; yet I like it not. [*To Josh.*] Sirrah ! shew them due courtesy as becometh their rank. [*Exit Josh.*

[*Enter Herbert Lee, Page in Waiting.*]

*Herbert*—My Lord, Dr. Sydenham who hath visited my Lady Claypole would see you !

*Cromwell.*—What say you, Lady Claypole is not worse ?

*Herbert.*—No, my Lord, I heard them say better ; but 'twas your Highness's command that you would see Dr. Sydenham.

*Cromwell.*—True ; bid the Doctor wait. Stay ! I will to him. He is a man amongst ten thousand whose very smile is a cure. To stand atween him and the sad world he blesses by his skill were even a crime. [*Exit Cromwell, Herbert following.*

SCENE III.—A GALLERY OR CORRIDOR IN THE PALACE.

ANTE SCENE.

*Enter Joshua Buckthorn and Charles Harfleur.*

*Charles.*—Well, old Buck ! I believe that's your name.

*Josh.*—Fair Sir, one day his Highness in his humour did so designate me, and so accepted be it, that, beshrew me, I believe 'twill go

to posterity as designating all men of my age, quality, and position. My true name, nevertheless, is Joshua Buckthorn, the Honourable Joshua Buckthorn.

*Charles*.—Have you children, Honourable Joshua?

*Josh*.—Sir, it were indeed once on the tapidge that my lineage would condescend; but Mrs. B., Sir, Honourable Mrs. Buckthorn, having unintentionally, quite unintentionally I assure you, Sir, on her part, played false to the nation the happiness was not realized.

*Charles*.—Mind it not, Honourable Joshua, you are still the founder of a large family; the progenitor of all old Bucks henceforward, and for good.

*Josh*.—Truly, the idea pleaseth me; I will even tablet it: and now, Sir, may I ask for your honourable epitaph?

*Charles*.—They call me Charles, Charles Harfleur.

*Josh*.—[*Writes*.] Charles Harfleur: and pray you, Mr. Charles Harfleur, whence come ye?

*Charles*.—Honourable Joshua, to men of low cunning would I conceal myself; but as, to thy profundity, concealment were mere pretence, I confess me at once I am from France.

*Josh*. [*Aside*.]—The youth hath discretion beyond his octaves. [*To Charles*.] Noble Sir, my confidence is yours, but I pray you tell me, with thine eye even on mine; meditate you any harm to his Highness?

*Charles*.—Believe me, Honourable friend, I care no jot about his Highness, nor any Highness, nor any King, Lord, Potentate, nor Governor; I go in for three heads, peace, love, and fun; that is my creed, top, bottom, rough, hard, soft, all ways, any ways.

*Josh*.—My own sentiments to an earthquake; and now, Sir, what can I do to please you?

*Charles*.—My first requirement is a personal honour. When in the East I did shoot birds of Paradise, and out of their plumage did in leisure hours, on board the “Cavalier,” make this head-dress; the which, I pray you, Sir, to accept for your accomplished wife. [*Presents head-dress*.]

*Josh*. [*Aside*.]—A most deserving youth! [*To Charles*.] Fair Sir, a bird of Paradise chaplet for Mrs. B. (the Honourable



Mrs. B.) is indeed a treasure; t'will make her Highness Elizabeth herself venturesome in her linguals, prudish tho' she be. I pray you, Sir, as a matter of natural history, as my Lord is wont to say: Are birds of Paradise hard to shoot?

*Charles.*—That depends on the part of the garden in which you waylay them. These came to the reach of my piece, as if they foresaw the kindred home to which their golden plumage would return.

*Josh.* [*Aside*].—What a beautiful sentiment; Jack Milton would not take back the light of his orbs for it. [*To Charles.*] Is the garden large, Sir?

*Charles.*—It takes two men the whole of the day for each of them to walk round it at the rate of four measured miles the hour on the longest day.

*Josh.*—Ah! I was sure Adam never got round it in a day. Sir, I regret that time waiteth not even for such edifying conversation. What further is your desire? Will you to his Highness?

*Charles.*—Nay, Sir, not to Oliver, but to the fair Nora, with whom, in honest truth to you, I am in love.

*Josh.*—A glorious passion! Doth the Lady Rachel know of this?

*Charles.*—She doth not; she's mad.

*Josh.*—Mine own opinion; I will call the damsel Nora; I like the damsel, and a fair wife were she; but mark me, noble Cavalier, she hath no lands.

*Charles.*—It signifieth naught; I have lands far and wide when I take my possessions.

*Josh.* [*Aside*].—A thought fits my skull, and fills my brain; 'tis whispered that Prince Charles is even in this city. What if this be the prince? I'll hit him with the very cudgel of my wit. [*To Charles.*] Most noble Charles, I will summon thy Queen that shall be. [*Aside and retiring.*] He takes the inspiration. He sees how I see, and I see how he sees; Honourable J. B., thou art indeed a seer. [*Exit Joshua.*]

*Charles.*—By the tooth of St. George, to say nothing of the dragon, if I hav'nt primed that old he-goat with more lies than a priest would confess me of in leap year. And these are the men this usurper puts into his court. Were I an earnest man, hang me

on the gallows of Haman if I wouldn't join those mad Cavaliers I met in the Fleet last night, and murder the villain. And then, again, why should I? He never hurt me. Now, Miss Nora, I have to face you, and a nice combing I shall have; it can't be helped, though, it's sure to come right, and if it doesn't it can't matter in a hundred years. Heigho! here comes the weird woman. I must retire. [*Retires singing—*

“When the gods went to bed, when the gods went to bed,  
The goddess great Juno was courted by Jove;  
They quarrelled all night, but it ended all right,  
For quarrels are but the beginning of love.”

*Enter Rachel.*

*Rachel* [*when Charles's voice has ceased.*].—A voice, a voice, but no substance. Whence it came I must know. A song! a song! a ribald song! I follow not heathens; yet doth something drag me, and say, Follow, Rachel, follow!

[*Exit Rachel, following the sound.*

*Re-enter Charles.*

*Charles.*—There she goes, like a male trooper in petticoats. Now, then, Miss Nora.

*Enter Josh. and Nora.*

*Josh.*—Sweet princess in esse, he singeth songs to his royal self for the good of his people. I will retire until such time as shall be meet to tell you this ordnance must be dissipated.

[*Exit Josh.*

*Nora.*—Nay, madcap, and how camest thou here? will thy discretion never play watch-dog to thy valour? To sing heathen songs under the very windows of Cromwell is the tip top of folly.

*Charles.*—If you say another word, I'll stop your mouth with kisses.  
[*Kisses her.*]

*Nora.*—Charles, be sensible.

*Charles.*—Nora, be sensible! why did you not give me the proper pass for the garden?

*Nora.*—I could not. Listen, Charles. There is a plot on foot against the life of Cromwell; and at three this morning all the sentries and all the pass-words were suddenly changed. Now I

have the new pass, changed again this very hour. Next time thou would'st enter, try not the western gate; that gate, for reasons I know not, is under the special care of the lion Smite-em and my mother.

*Charles*.—Your mother?

*Nora*.—Yes, the Lady Rachel; she is my mother. How you stare. I must have had a mother, I suppose.

*Charles*.—I don't dispute it: but, Nora, that mother of yours troubles me; wherever I go she comes.

*Nora*.—No, no, Charles, not so, not so; but she looks ever and everywhere for my poor brother who was killed. 'Tis a sad delusion.

*Charles*.—Is your mother related to Cromwell?

*Nora*.—By distant cousinship, I don't know how many removes, yes; and her notion is, that she with him came down from a race of native kings. She carries with her the remains of an ancient crown of reeds, interwoven with thread of gold.

*Charles*.—Poor Rachel!

*Nora*.—But indeed 'tis true they did both descend from kings.

*Charles*.—So did I; at least I have a dream of being told so. Ah me! ah me! how strange! it is as though in some previous life all this story had been told me before. Did your father fight?

*Nora*.—'Twas thus. When the wars began, my mother's father did perforce make her marry Sir Thomas Lane, a Royalist. One day, before my birth, my mother did repair to see her relations, the Lees of Hartwell. In her absence some Parliamentary troopers did storm my father's house, and he was destroyed, fighting to the last. His body was recovered and buried, but my poor brother with all the household perished. Returning, Lady Rachel, who was of the Hampden line, shedding no tears for her husband, did believe herself told by a spirit that her son still did live and would yet be found: thence she to the wars, and, meeting with the sectary preachers, doth believe herself inspired, and like the women of old doth prophesy and cheer the fighting hosts, and minister to the wounded, and meanwhile doth yet look for her son. And so often hath she foretold events, and so often escaped great perils, that Cromwell himself doth in time



believe in her, and trust in her next unto his powder. But why do you pale, dearest, and hold so closely?

*Charles*.—'Tis a strange story, love; to me wonderful; but let it pass for the news I bring; our vessel lies safely at Newhaven, and waits but for us. Is there still in thy mind no obstacle to our departure?

*Nora*.—None.

*Charles*.—Not thy mother?

*Nora*.—Nay, dearest, atween myself and the Lady Rachel there is a mystical bond without love. Very early she left me in charge of Elizabeth Cromwell, now the Lady Claypole; and though the servitude is gentle, it hath its ties. Till I met thee first in my visit with the Lockharts in Paris: 'twas an even life mine; aimless, hopeless, loveless: but now with thee, in that new land of promise, afar in the west, there will be aim, hope, love. I will go, too happy to have thee away from all the dangers of this dangerous time.

*Charles*—Sweet lover of a lover, say no more. This day make thy preparations. At early morning, in the garden and in our customary retreat, will I tell thee where to-morrow we may meet; and then, farewell old England! to me no home, to thee no solace; and away to the pilgrim fathers of the New World.

*Enter Mrs. Buckthorn.*

*Mrs. Buckthorn*.—Fair young royalties, my breath is distracted with my haste; embrace and vanish; the Lady Rachel cometh this way. She roameth the orbit of the palace. Haste, sir, nor await my blessing. She comes.

*Charles*. [*To Nora softly*.]—The password?

*Nora*.—Lebanon.

*Charles*.—I shall be faithful. Farewell.

[*Exit Charles.*]

*Enter Rachel.*

*Rachel*. [*Aside*.]—I have a sense that, in the gasp of time  
I have been here, some spirit hath withdrawn  
That drew the air I draw; some shade hath passed  
Before mine inner sight, and cast a line  
Fine as a web across my thinking soul.

If so, I must not question mortal form :  
 Th' invisible and visible no oneness hold.  
 The spirit prompting me works all alone,  
 Or silent rests. Yet would I know their knowing.

[Calls Nora! An echo repeats the word "Nora."]

Nora [earnestly].—Yes, mother, speak, I'll tell thee all the truth.

Rachel.—Hist, hist, my child, there's some one else calls Nora.

Nora.—It was the echo from the palace wall :

There's always echo here.

Rachel. [Calls Nora! Echo—"Nora!"]

Rachel.—Stand back, my child, and call out loudly, Rachel.

Nora.—Rachel !

Rachel.—It echoes naught but Nora.

"When echo calls to one, and not to all,  
 Some fate hangs low on those it doth not call :  
 Strive then to know no more, 'tis heaven's decree :  
 But haste thy ways, and let the mystery be."

Mrs. Buckthorn [Aside].—The woman bringeth over me the cold  
 Presbyterians! [To Rachel.] Shall we go hence, my Lady?  
 shall we go?

Rachel [To both].—Go first, go first, on tiptoe glide away,  
 The spirit seeketh here its house of clay :  
 Fain would it speak, but cannot—hist! away.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE IV.—WHITEHALL PLACE, OPPOSITE TO THE WINDOWS OF  
 THE HOUSE FROM WHICH CHARLES THE FIRST STEPPED FOR  
 EXECUTION.

Enter the Duke de Tours and M. de Leonine. They bare their heads.

Leonine.—This was the spot, your Grace.

De Tours.—So, so!

Leonine.—Where now we stand, there stood the howling mob  
 Some loyal still and weeping, but the mass  
 Dead to all sense of love. The scaffold rose  
 From yonder centre window, and the guards,  
 Chiefly of Ironsides, were filed around,  
 Armed to the teeth; each one a regicide.

The Duke says it is the  
 and town door in Building nearly  
 opposite Admiralty - front floor  
 that it is an error which can be

'Thus, as the clock struck twelve, before the block  
 The royal martyr stood, nor feared, nor paled.  
 'The flush of victory was on his brow—  
 The victory that triumphs over death  
 And spans the ghastly grave. He spake with grief  
 That he had once unworthily dispatched  
 His faithful servant Strafford so to die.  
 Then to the Bishop Juxon bending low,  
 These holy breaths of faith escaped his lips.  
 I leave a crown corruptible, to take  
 One that is incorruptible; I go  
 Where no disturbance, no unrest can be.  
 His George removed from him, upon the block  
 He laid his head, and with the word "Remember,"  
 (In peace with Heaven, with man, and his own heart,)  
 Resigned his spirit to the Mighty One  
 Who gave it unto him. His royal hands  
 He raised, in signal for the fatal blow.  
 Then through the rended air the gleaming steel  
 Flew without mercy: and the kingly blood  
 Poured o'er the scaffold to the weeping earth.  
 Some dipped their kerchiefs in the purple stream,  
 And treasured them as relics: a few called traitor.  
 But, when the deed was done, the many wept,  
 And stood in horror, as if nature struck,  
 Would show some dreadful sign of her great wrath.

*De Tours.*—To weep is vain, to act is wisdom's call.

It hath been nobly spoken, as I speak it.  
 He was the worthiest of gentlemen,  
 The best of masters and the best of friends,  
 The best of husbands and the best of sires,  
 The best of Christians of this living age.

[*Enter Rachel, who takes position before the centre window*]

*Rachel.*—Thus perish all thine enemies, oh Lord,  
 But those that love Thy name, let them go forth  
 Like to the conquering sun in all his might.

*De Tours.*—Who speaketh thus?

Is this an insult to our broken heart?



*Leonine*.—I pray your Grace conceal your natural rage ;  
 This woman knows us not : and it were well  
 She knew us not : this is a sorceress  
 Who mourns a long lost son ! who in the camp  
 And in the council wields a mystic power  
 Which few can know : perchance she'll speak to us.  
 Avoid her not, but give thy tongue disguise.

*Rachel*. [*Turning round sees them. To De Tours*].—Pardon, fair Sir,  
 pardon ; would'st know thy fate ?

*De Tours*.—Aye, aye, an' thou be wise so to, vat you call, cast it.

*Rachel*.—Thou art of foreign blood ?

*De Tours*.—Oui, oui, foreign blood ?

*Rachel*.—And yet hath thy tongue a strange English bottom, and thy  
 face hath Saxon in it ; thou art of English blood nurtured  
 abroad ?

*De Tours*.—English blood, English blood ; bon, bon.

*Rachel*. [*Aside*].—Be that broken English or mock French, I wist  
 not. 'Tis strange. The voice might be so ; the age is right.  
 The build as I have dreamed it. Fair lord, your hand. [*She*  
*tears up his sleeve. Aside*].—Once more deceived.

*De Tours*.—Thou art tearsome, tearsome ; vat be my fate ; be it tear  
 aussi ?

*Rachel*.—Thy future is thine own, and if thou takest my advice it will  
 be good. Be thou careful to be wiser than all other men, and  
 thou wilt then be the wisest of all the world where there be no  
 women. Farewell, fair Sirs, I must away. [*Aside.*] Mock  
 French, mock French ! [*Exit Rachel.*]

*De Tours*.—Would that we now could throw off our disguise,  
 And have revenge.

*Leonine*.—Revenge were better stored for quieter hours,  
 And safer haunts than these. Our stand is sure.  
 That love-sick swain, hot-headed, loose of tongue,  
 Intoxicate with wine and love combined,  
 Hath filled th' avenger's mouth with one good word,  
 That like a key shall open every gate.  
 To-morrow's sun lights up th' usurper dead,  
 And in his stead the king alive again.

[*Noise of the advance of a procession.*]

We must retire; here with its noisy guard  
Cometh the trunk, that twelve hours more doth wear  
Its grisly head.

*De Tours*.—I would meet him now.

*Leonine*.—'Twere madness: this way!

[*Enter Cromwell, surrounded by Guards, and followed by a crowd.*  
*Crossing the stage, he is met by a woman bearing a petition.*]

*A Guard*.—Hold back woman: clear for his Highness

*Cromwell*.—Hold there, hold there, who is this? Our progress can hardly be stayed thus. Bring the woman here. What is thy name, Dame, and thy request?

*Margery Beauchamp*.—My name, my Lord, is Margery Beauchamp, and my petition that your Highness would admit my son to the Charterhouse in return for his father's services to the Commonwealth.

*Cromwell*.—I thought the thing were done.

Gave I not order for't some months ago?

*Margery*.—True, my Lord, but the managers heed it not.

*Cromwell*. [*To Greateorex, Captain of Guard.*]

We have no shining bauble on our breast,  
Nor feather in our cap for fools to gaze at;  
But we have power for foes to tremble at.  
We can deny petitions, and whatever  
We think is proper, for an outward form,  
We can refer to any officer.

But 'tis our mind that such award to custom  
Shall be an indication of our will  
And pleasure, that the thing be done forthwith.  
See, therefore, that the boy be straight received.

[*Loud cheers from the crowd.*]

*Margery*.—Thanks, thanks, your Highness.

*Cromwell*.—No thanks, good Margery. Your husband once  
Did for ourselves and for the Commonwealth  
Right trusty services; where doth he rest?

*Margery*.—At Spring Street, Chelsea, my Lord; but so is he afflicted, he leaveth not his bed.

*Cromwell*.—Tell him, to-morrow we will come to him, [*Loud cheers.*]

[*A noise as of horsemen approaching.*]

*Enter Messenger in haste.*

*Messenger.*—My Lord, some hundred horsemen, armed and trained,  
Rush down the Fleet upon your Highness' person,  
Crying "Revenge! Charles Stuart, and revenge."

*Cromwell.* [*To his Guards.*].—Clear the crowd.

[*Guards clear the way.*]

How many men of metal are there here?

*The Guard*—Ten, my lord.

*Cromwell.*—Stand in line.

Are you all schooled in faith and discipline?

Do you fear God, and keep your powder dry?

*Guards.*—Yea, verily.

*Cromwell.*—Good. Then are you a hundred, if withal you shoot low.

Eh there! eh there! there's a white face, and a piece dropping.  
Who is this man for a guard to Cromwell? Bring him forward.

*Greutorex.*—One Ishmael Graves, my lord.

*Ishmael Graves.*—I am better: 'twas but a passing swoon. I could shoot now.

*Cromwell.*—Aye, perhaps thou could'st, I don't deny thee that;

But thou must go thy ways. The noise thou heard'st

Was like thy act, a feint, a false alarm

To put to test the mettle of good men.

I blame thee not, for thou perchance hast gifts

As good as fighting gifts.

Whate'er they be, go find them out and use them.

For nature made no gift except for use,

Nor man without a gift. I bid you go

In all good will; your pay will follow you.

*Greutorex.*—Truly your Highness hath judged rightly, for this same man, frightened though he be at the smell of powder, hath invented a weapon of singular power, which my Lord of Warwick, who hath bought one for his castle, doth specially commend to your Highness' attention.

*Cromwell.*—What is the weapon?

*Greutorex.*—'Tis here, my lord; a gun which Ishmael doth call a  
"six-shooter." It carrieth six charges, which can be fired in



turn. It hath also a grooved barrel, and sendeth each ball two hundred yards with precision, except in a high wind.

*Cromwell.* [*Taking the weapon*].—If it be true, 'tis a device will make England invincible. Is't loaded?

*Ishmael.*—It is, my lord.

*Cromwell.*—Go tie a cap upon the maypole there.

How do I use the weapon?

*Ishmael.*—As an ordinary piece from the shoulder, my lord: as your Highness pulls the trigger, each charge will turn to the barrel till all are fired.

*Cromwell.*—We will give fair trial. [*Cromwell fires.*]

*Greatorrex.*—'Tis a hit.

*Cromwell fires five barrels in succession.*

*Cromwell.*—Now fetch the cap.

*Ishmael.* [*Bringing the cap.*].—Your Highness hath given it five balls.

*Cromwell.*—Excellent, excellent, Ishmael: where art thou from?

*Ishmael.*—Bromwychum, your Highness, a town of iron, with every house a forge. We made your Highness' O. C. swords at a forge there.

*Cromwell.*—And swords they were!

Ishmael, we did surprise thee with our gifts,

And thou with thine, in turn, surprisest us.

Henceforward be thou our Commissioner

To thy good townsmen, and make Bromwychum [*Checks them*]

The armoury of this fair Commonwealth.

Then let your trusty metal ring where'er

An Englishman, in peace or war, shall breathe.

Soldiers, three hearty cheers for Bromwychum.

And may this central English town become,

As I do doubt not, with such skilful men

As Ishmael in its midst, it will become,

The heart and citadel of English might.

Now then, give freedom to your pent up breath.

Three cheers for Bromwychum and trusty steel!

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

*The soldiers cheer and the scene closes.*

I'd like her would let pole & cap be  
 made on stage but far back on  
 right hand, and would fire from  
 young on left hand

## ACT II.

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SCENE I.—AN AUDIENCE ROOM IN THE PALACE OF WHITEHALL.  
THE CABINET OF CROMWELL.

*Cromwell.* [*Alone.*].—What will men say of me when I am dead?  
Will they say, Cromwell lived for England's fame,  
Fought but for England's glory, laid his life  
A thousand times before the ark of death  
For England and her priceless liberty?  
Will Englishmen when they, in after times,  
Pass by the ruined castles I have razed,  
Take off their hats and hail him with acclaim,  
Who ground these haunts of tyranny to dust?  
Will they cry, Hail to Cromwell! when they read  
He was the first that dared to break the spell  
Of right divine, and kill the thing called King,  
When the thing broke the law it should enshrine?  
Or will they, blind to truth, and vengeance mad,  
Confound the details of an anxious life,  
And terrible demands of cruel fate,  
With principles of action; and thus see  
Evil so mixed with good that good is evil?  
Or will they reading naught but mortal sin,  
Treason and murder; no! not murder, no!  
Condemn me in their histories to hell?  
Alas! I know not; but myself I know.  
It is enough. I have obeyed my call.

*Enter Herbert Lee.*

*Herbert.*—My Lord, your Highness.

*Cromwell.*—Heighso! Heighso! Who speaks?

*Herbert.* [*Advancing.*] My Lord, on the opening of the door of the northern entrance we did discover nailed to the lintel this packet. 'Tis for your Highness.

*Cromwell.*—When was this?

*Herbert.*—My Lord, but this instant.

*Cromwell.*—Is the packet closed and sealed?

*Herbert.*—Securely, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Open it.

*Herbert.*—I, my Lord? 'Tis for your Highness.

*Cromwell.*—Perchance, child, it is so, in a sense thou deemest not.

[*Aside.*] 'Twere a coward's trick, Cromwell, to expose him to thy dangers. [*To Herbert.*] No; stay! Hold! Thou can'st go.

*Herbert.*—Good my Lord, I will open the packet be it your Highness' command, though it were death to do it.

*Cromwell.*—Thou art a brave lad; but I would fain thou gavest it to me, and did'st depart.

*Herbert.*—Your Highness' will is mine.

[*Exit.*]

*Cromwell*—I have been forewarned

Of treacherous packets, carrying lethal spells.

Pshaw! what fear I? I, who have stood unscathed,

In storm of war: when shot fell thick as hail;

Swords took the lightning's flash, and human thunder

Rivalled the blasts of heaven! Tush! Shall I

Tremble to break a seal? Faint-hearted man!

Cromwell faint-hearted? No! [*Breaks the seal.*]

How! what infernal ghost besets me now?

[*Reads*] "Killing no murder!" What meaneth this? What knave in printer's ink is hidden here? Killing no murder! and a dedication, forsooth, to his Highness Oliver Cromwell. Eh! what says the villain? truly he speaks boldly. [*Reads.*] "My intention is to procure your Highness that justice that nobody yet does you. To your Highness justly belongs the honour of dying for the people: and it cannot but be an unspeakable consolation to you, in the last moments of your life, to consider with how much benefit to the world you are likely to leave it." What! what! what! Assassination again. I have never yet met an assassin face to face But this—

[*Enter Herbert.*]

*Herbert.*—Sir Richard Willis waiteth your commands.



*Cromwell.*—Sir Richard Willis! 'Tis an opportune call; bring him at once to me.

*Herbert.*—I will, my Lord.

*Cromwell* [*reading from pamphlet*].—"To hasten this great good is the chief end of writing this paper; and if it have the effect I hope it will, your Highness will quickly be out of the reach of men's malice; and your enemies will only be able to wound you in your memory, which strokes you will not feel."

'Tis treason this; can I command no ease?

No moment's rest? Oh! had I'd ne'er been born.

[*Enter Sir Richard Willis.*]

Sir Richard, you come in season. Know you aught of this conspiracy?

*Sir Richard* [*looking at pamphlet*].—No, my Lord; indeed nothing.

*Cromwell.*—Is't from no member of the sealed knot?

*Sir Richard.*—No, my Lord, from none; and indeed 'tis clearly not yet published: it is what the printer calleth "a proof." I know nothing of it.

*Cromwell.*—Keep thou open, then, thine hawk's eye; for 'tis murder that thou shalt thus keep down: nay more, through that knot of thine, make thou this known, that Cromwell, though he be merciless to traitors, hath never looked on assassination save to court it.

*Sir Richard.*—'Tis a determination, my Lord, I will most widely make known.

*Cromwell.*—My speech is not ended. Add further; that at this hour if Cromwell *would*, he could assassinate Charles and every member of his accursed family, the which he will do, be the attempt of the example first set him and he escape the outrage.

*Sir Richard.*—It shall be done.

*Cromwell.*—I trust thee to mine heart's core. A word more. In thy rounds to-day, get me the history of two Frenchmen, a Duke de Tours and a young Leonine, who are to this court from the Cardinal, so it is affirmed.

*Sir Richard.*—I will nail them both.

*Cromwell.*—We must not talk longer. Farewell.

*Sir Richard.*—I salute your Highness.

*Enter Josh. Buckthorn.*

*Josh.*—Be your Highness ready to receive?

*Cromwell.*—Aye, aye, do many wait?

*Josh.*—A goodly few, your Highness.

*Cromwell.*—For one hour give admittance, not on quality,  
 But whoso entered first let him have place. [*Exit Josh.*  
 Now came these harpies here to buffet me.  
 I'll play the king, aye, faith, a roll of kings.  
 Some come to ask for favours and to flatter;  
 I'll play king Stork with them.  
 Some come to speak of faults they cannot mend;  
 I'll show them theirs off-hand. Some to advise,  
 Who want advice; I'll play these Solomon.  
 Some come to heal who cannot heal themselves;  
 To them I'll give a taste of royal touch.  
 And some perchance, with murder in their hearts,  
 Would call me to account; to these I'll play  
 The King of Terrors. [*Takes out his pistols and examines them.*]  
 Good trusty friends, your master greets you well;  
 Who crosses him shall belch his fire with you. [*Rings.*]

*Enter Josh. Buckthorn.*

*Josh.*—My lord, the first audience is one Smite-em-on-the-cheek Colman; this be-eth his token, he carrieth it in his boots.  
 [*Reads a card.*] “Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman.” A scurrilous knave methinks: he doth abuse the court fashions and stigmatizeth me Beelzebub.

*Cromwell.*—Well! Beelzebub, 'tis a good name.

Let him be admitted. He is an honest man. [*Exit Josh.*  
 What shall I do with Smite'em? I must try cajolery with Smite'em, lest he smite.

[*Enter Josh. and Smite'em.*]

*Smite'em.*—Bang. [*Aside.*]—Now, master Noll, who's who?

*Cromwell*—Master Buckthorn, who is this Bantam?

*Josh.*—One Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman, my Lord.

*Cromwell.* [*Inspecting Smite'em.*]—Aye, aye, sayest thou so? Why, Smite'em, old friend, I would not have known thee had I met thee in St. James's. Hast turned cavalier, man? In that

pagan garb thou art no Ironside. Josh. Buckthorn, didst thou disguise this man in thy fooleries, or came he thus of his own free will?

*Josh.*—My Lord, he came, as I may say, in so far as I am concerned, as when he came into the world.

*Smite'em.*—Verily came I from the City of Dublin to this abode, nor changed a garment by the way; I am as one at sea.

*Cromwell.*—Then must I to Ireland to stop these fooleries. Take heed of him, Joshua Buckthorn. He hath a helmet of silver and a plume of ———. What is that plume Joshua?

*Josh.*—My Lord, I think it be a bird-of-paradise tail.

*Cromwell.*—A plume of a bird of paradise! A coat of silken velvet, a shoulder-plate of gold, and a belt set with emeralds; hose of finely woven wool, greaves of Cyprus leather, and a sword-hilt of black ivory. His eyebrows are stained to give effect to his snout, and his raiment is odoriferous of frankincense and myrrh. Hast thou all that down in thy book, Joshua?

*Josh.*—Word for word, your Highness, to the which I have added mine own epitaph in condensation of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

*Smite'em* [*aside.*]*—Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman, thou art sold; transfixed on thine own sword. [To Cromwell.]—Nolliver Cromwell dost thou see mine eye?*

*Cromwell.*—I do.

*Smite'em.*—It's a winking at you. Dost thou see my fist?

*Cromwell.* [*Laughing.*]*—Certainly, and a fine ram's head it is.*

*Smite'em.*—It's a battering ram, and it's a shaking at you, Nolliver. Noll, Noll, thou art a hypocrite; but ye're old Noll yet, spite of all they say of you; and ye've the same clothes ye wore at Naseby when I came up to the mill; and ye keep your wart on your chopper, and ye hav'nt combed your mop, and ye twinkle your eye the same as when ye kicked me out of bed, and ye hav'nt got over lying—and that's bad; but ye're still Nolliver Cromwell of St. Ives, and I love you, Noll, with all my heart and all my strength, and I'll stick to you as long as I stick to myself. That's a wow.

*Cromwell.*—Smite'em, Smite'em, thou art a rascal, and thou



walkest round old Noll better than any will-o'-the-wisp in this house. But what detained thee, man?

*Smite'em.*—Truly, Master Oliver, I changed not a garment, yet did I go a few hours aside to hear preach a tinker of Elstow, one John Bunyan.

*Cromwell.*—I have heard of him; what sayest thou of his exhortation?

*Smite'em.*—Let him preach to thee, General; he will say a word in season and with power.

*Cromwell.*—It shall be done; sing a verse, *Smite'em*, sing a verse.

*Smite'em.*—Yea, verily, I like that.

[*Takes out a book and looks out a verse.*]

*Cromwell.*—What is your book?

*Smite'em.*—It's a good book, General. It's Simeon Have-your-bloods standing collection of hymns for pious soldiers. Rewised and edited by the Rev. Amos *Smite'em-under-the-fifth-rib* Piecemeal; a wonderful preacher!

*Cromwell.*—I do not know him.

*Smite'em.*—Then you ought to. He knows you. Let us sing.

[*Gives corner of book to Cromwell to hold. They sing.*]

“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh,  
And through water and through fire  
Make to fly thine enemy;  
Rend his limbs and never tire.”

General, thou hast no voice for psalmody.

*Cromwell.*—I know it, *Smite'em*, but thou hast; and it be-eth a gift.

Josh. Buckthorn, how darest thou put thy thumbs in thy ears?

*Josh.*—'Tis from rheumatics, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—Dr. Sydenham shall see to it, sirrah; he shall bleed thee.

What sayest thou, *Smite'em*?

*Smite'em.*—Verily, 'twill bare him of fat.

*Josh.*—Fat?

*Cromwell.* [*To Josh.*].—Go thy ways, I would speak to this man alone.

*Josh.* [*Aside.*].—Bare him of fat, indeed! [*Exit.*]

*Cromwell.*—*Smite'em* my old friend, I want thy best aid; mine enemies, *Smite'em*, seek my life because I will not be king.

*Smite'em.*—I hate that.

*Cromwell.*—Care not what thou hatest, but attend. I trust thee, man, and I want thee to be near me whenever there is danger.

*Smite'em*.—I like that.

*Cromwell*.—Care not what thou likest either, but do thy duty. Be thou near to me; be deaf to what passes, and dumb to what hath passed; but let the vigilance of thine eye make up for the lameness of thy tongue and if I say to thee seize, seize; and if I say strike, strike. Thou understandest?

*Smite'em*.—Yea, verily.

*Cromwell*.—Hast thou that piece of thine in gear?

*Smite'em*.—'Twould fetch down a starling from the weathercock of St. Neot's.

*Cromwell*.—Take thy place: thou art on guard. [*Cromwell rings.*]

*Enter Josh. Buckthorn and Pasqua.*

*Josh*.—My, Lord, this man would present to your Highness a new drink from Arabia Phoenix.

*Cromwell*.—He is welcome. [*To Pasqua.*] What, Sir, is your name?

*Pasqua*.—Pasqua, my Lord.

*Cromwell*.—And what is the nature of your invention?

*Pasqua*.—My Lord, 'tis no invention of mine, but a wholesome beverage, most exhilarating yet not inebriating, which in Turkey is a great luxury, and which I would fain sell in London.

*Cromwell*.—What do you call it?

*Pasqua*.—Coffee, my Lord.

*Cromwell*.—From what is it derived?

*Pasqua*.—From a plant, your Highness, that grows in Arabia.

*Cromwell*.—Is it the berry, the bark, or the root that is used?

*Pasqua*.—The berry, my Lord: the berry is dried as I show your Highness: it is then ground to a powder in a mill, and the powder thus obtained is put in a vessel with boiling water: sugar and milk are added, and the beverage is made. Would your Lordship taste a berry?

*Cromwell*.—Aye, truly. [*Puts a berry in his mouth, and spits it out.*] Sirrah, what meaneth this? it is bitter

*Pasqua*.—It is slightly bitter, my Lord, but the beverage is not: I will make your Highness a cup to taste and it be your pleasure. [*He proceeds to make coffee, and pours out a cup.*]

*Cromwell*. [*Aside to Smite'em.*]—Watch thou this man. I like not the procedure.

*Pasqua*.—Will your Highness taste a cup?

*Cromwell*.—I have learned, I trust, in my own house to exercise due courtesy to the stranger; I will not presume to drink in this place before you; I pray you lead the way.

*Pasqua*.—I beseech your Highness ——

*Cromwell*.—I command you drink the cup.

*Josh*.—The coffee, my Lord, he cannot drink the cup.

*Cromwell*.—Give that fellow a pint to drink off straight.

[*Pasqua drinks and hands to Josh.*]

*Josh*.—I entreat your Highness.

*Cromwell*.—Drink it, Sir, off, off.

*Josh*.—My Lord it's so hot.

*Cromwell*.—If it make thy foul stomach parchment, drink it.

[*Josh drinks.*] Now, Sir, I will regale myself, I see thou art an honest man. [*He takes a cup of coffee.*—Good, Sir good; the aroma is exquisite, and the taste pleasant; but thou hast made it too sweet for my tooth. I like it, Sir, I like it; it cheereth me. When do the Orientals take it?

*Pasqua*.—It forms with them a morning or an evening beverage; they also present it on ceremony to their guests, and sip it with their pipes when they smoke

*Cromwell*.—Doth it sleep one?

*Pasqua*.—It doth not, but rather keepeth the wearied mind awake.

*Cromwell*.—That is good and bad. Where dost thou live?

*Pasqua*.—I have opened a place, my Lord, for coffee-drinking at George Yard, Lombard Street, in the City. The Lord Mayor hath honoured mine house.

*Cromwell*.—Very good, very good. I will try thy coffee anon with a pipe.

*Pasqua*.—T'will please your Lordship.

*Cromwell*.—I doubt it not. Farewell: I shall hope to hear of thy success, for if in any degree thou dost supplant the tapster thou doest good service to the State.

*Pasqua*.—I humbly thank your Highness. [*Josh. and Pasqua retire.*

*Enter Josh. and Thomas Betterton a young player.*

*Cromwell*.—What would you, Sir, with me?

*Betterton*.—I presume, your Highness, to come on the introduction of Davenant and Mr. Waller, your Highness' cousin, to ask permission, in the precincts of Westminster, to enact a play.



*Smite'em.* [*Aside.*—He's a play-actor; I hate that.

*Cromwell.*—Art thou by profession a player?

*Betterton.*—By your Highness' pleasure, I have that honour.

*Cromwell.*—I had thought the race were extinct in this Commonwealth.

*Betterton.*—Truly, my Lord, 'tis a sorry trade now; but there be of us who still cherish it, and trust to your Highness' wisdom to see it is good.

*Cromwell.*—Mr. Betterton, let me say that the sorriness of the trade is vastly the players' own fault. In the late reign they did so play, Sir,—it is true what I say,—that murder, arson, forgery, adultery, lying, swindling, and the weakest frivolity were the rage of the stage; at which good men did very naturally demur.

*Betterton.*—In shame, I admit 'twas so. Yet is there excuse, my Lord. The player, your Highness, must even like other men live by obeying his master, the public that fills his house, and must even reflect the vices the master exonerates. For my part, and believe me, I speak the thoughts of my brethren, I hate the sight of vice on the stage as I do off it, except it be to correct vice by showing its bad end, and then even with limitation of grossness. I would have the stage pure as the church, and in its way as good a teacher. This, too, let me assure your Highness, may, and, when the world demands it, will be.

*Cromwell.*—Thou art an enthusiast, Mr. Betterton.

*Betterton.*—My Lord, I am but what, on the world's wider yet not more truthful platform, your Lordship is. I would simply exalt mine office and proclaim its honesty.

*Cromwell.*—Well said! well said! Indeed, Mr. Player, thou hast practised king so keenly, thou dost become king by nature.

*Betterton.*—Your Lordship is unjustly severe.

*Cromwell.*—I am honest, man, perfectly. Know'st thou not that I did once wear the buskin? When old Beard of Huntingdon did keep the free school there, truly I did one Christmas time play *Tactus* in Tony Brewer's comedy of *Lingua*. Thou smilest, Mr. Betterton, but beshrew me I did play it well, and did bring down the house, so that, methinks, had I not been a great politician I had been a great actor.

*Smite'em.* [*Aside.*—I'll tell John Bunyan.

*Betterton*.—'Twere well, my Lord, we had no such rival.

*Cromwell*. [*Bowing.*].—Sir! As to thy wish, Mr. Betterton, would I could say, aye. To put down the stage, Sir, I know were as hard a task as to put down the existences it represents. Sir, it is life. Every man of mind hath either writ an act or felt himself an actor; a good play that giveth us the past is picture and sculpture too, that liveth and speaketh. It is true, Sir, very true, what I say of your art. It is, or rather may be, a school of morals. I confess I was once stayed a great sin by seeing the heinousness of it in a play, therefore I would admit you. But then I am one only of the nation.

*Betterton*.—But, my Lord——

*Cromwell*.—Oh, Sir! I am not a lout who understandeth not art, as many suppose. Sir, I love art. A true artist makes soul, Sir, puts soul into you, I may say. Look now at that picture. There is a lover embracing his mistress ere he goes to the battle. With what infinite cunning are his thoughts instilled into that canvass. My spirit, as I gaze, fills him; and that maiden's half-parted lips, I kiss them with the chasteness of his love.

*Smite'em*. [*Aside.*].—Beelzebub! Beelzebub! what a seven-headed beast. Drown him in the Jordan, but I'll tell his Lizabeth.

*Cromwell*.—Oh, truly, Sir, as you see I am with you, and although I can give you no permission to do this thing, I withhold none. I think that is fair.

*Betterton*.—Most fair, your Lordship. Then will we to-morrow revive Macbeth.

*Cromwell*.—Eh! eh! eh! [*Aside.*] I must stifle Macbeth. [*Rings.*]  
*Enter Josh. Buckthorn.*

Smite'em, art thou ready?

*Smite'em*.—To the teeth, General. I like that.

*Cromwell*.—Take Josh. Buckthorn into the next room.

[*Exit Josh. and Smite'em.*]

[*To Betterton.*] Good Player, to the wise  
 A word sufficeth. Thy immortal master  
 William the Wonder, writing for all time  
 Hath written plays befitting every time.  
 Methinks the play, if I were now to choose  
 What would befit the time, would be King John.

*Betterton*.—Shall be so, my Lord? we will revive King John.

*Cromwell*.—There be some thoughts in it 'twere well to enforce.  
What's that which says, "The priest, the priest,"—no, "The Italian priest,"—I do forget the words.

*Betterton*.—Shall I help your Highness?—

"No Italian priest  
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;  
But as we under heaven our supreme head,  
So under him that great supremacy  
Where we do reign we will alone uphold."

*Cromwell*.—Yes, yes; emphasise that, Sir, as thou dost to me. Good, Sir, good. There is another passage touching England.

*Betterton*.—"Come the three corners of the world in arms,  
And we shall shock them. Naught shall make us rue,  
If England to herself do rest but true."

*Cromwell*.—Good, Sir; better even than the first. Emphasise that, Sir.

*Betterton*.—We will obey your wishes.

*Cromwell*.—'Tis well, 'tis well; and do more even than I have said.  
Give the painter a turn also. For an artist to play to a sheet of canvass, chalked upon "This is a wood," "This is a mountain," "This is a house." Rot, Sir, rot! Were I a player I'd play in a wood, and consider that painter did me most honour who enframed me most nobly in nature. These things want to be amended, Sir.

*Betterton*.—My Lord, I could have no better task than take your Highness' directions for a play as you would wish it set.

*Cromwell*.—Oh, I could do it; 'twere not more difficult than setting a siege; but not now, Sir, not now. When times grow wiser, I may perchance call thee to court: meantime, farewell! As thou leavest, send back those knaves. To cousin Waller our love.

*Betterton*.—Your Highness' words are hope to hopeless men. [*Exit*.

*Re-enter Josh. and Smite'em.*

*Josh* —Manasseh Ben Israel, your Highness, a learned rabbit, prayeth audience.

*Cromwell*.—Go to, thou bloodless pickernose, thou meanest Rabbi, the most famous of Jews of his generation. Say to that great man, with all friendship we wait for him. [*Exit Josh*.



*Enter Manasseh Ben Israel.*

[*Cromwell uncovers, and does reverence.*]

*Cromwell.*—Father of thy people, I pray thy blessing.

*Manasseh.*—My blessing on thee and thine house, and thy nation!

All Israel blesseth thee in me!

*Cromwell.*—I would have nothing better. What would'st thou of me?

*Manasseh.*—One simple good; that we, oppressed and scorned,

A hated people in a foreign land,

May worship as we hope is best for us,

And hold our own protected by the law,

The which in turn shall our obedience claim.

That we may raise our tabernacle here

And lay our silent dead in holy ground

Are our first wishes.

*Cromwell.*—I am a man of short and simple speech,

I love your race as I love liberty.

Go, build another temple if you will,

And, in requite, let but your children learn

The name of Cromwell from their mother's lips,

As worthy of their lisping guileless speech,

And I am paid a thousand times in full.

*Manasseh.*—Father of England! henceforth shalt thou be

Father of Israel too. All peace be with thee. [*Exit Manasseh.*]

*Cromwell.* [*Sitting to write. Writes, muses, and speaks aside.*]

Lambert one, Fleetwood two, Desborough two, my own  
flesh and blood! two, four, six. 'Tis hard [*to Smite'em.*]

Hold! see'st thou who cometh here?

*Smite'em.*—Verily it be-eth Rachel, and the spirit be-eth on her.

*Cromwell.*—Give her way Smite'em, and move her not even with a  
sigh. Be she spoken with, the spell is gone.

*Enter Rachel, carrying a coronet of reeds.*

*Rachel.*—A voice from the east, a voice from the west,

A voice from the north, a voice from the south,

A voice from the four corners of the earth,

A voice crying woe! woe! woe!

Woe, woe to mine own.

Woe to my race and to me.  
 Let Rachel sing woe to all,  
 Royal of old and of might,  
 If her son be not found, found  
 Ere she shall go from the earth  
 To dwell in the shades of night,  
 To be no more seen of men.

Woe ! woe to mine own.

Woe, woe to this house.

To him who is almost king,  
 Descended of kings of old.  
 Let his pride fall down to dust—  
 His, who would touch the throne.  
 Woe, woe to him if he take  
 What cometh not from Heaven.  
 He shall fall, he shall fall, fall,  
 And his name, to him most dear,  
 Shall sink to the earth a curse.

Woe ! woe to this house.

Woe, woe to the crown.

Crown of his race and of mine ;  
 I lay at his feet to try,  
 His faith, his truth, and his fame : [feet.  
 I lay at his feet my rights ; [Lays crown at Cromwell's  
 Dares he to touch them withal ?

Woe ! woe to the crown.

Woe, woe to the land.

Woe ! for the raven shall scream,  
 And drink the blood of the slain ;  
 Woe ! for the sun shall go down,  
 When at noon it should light the plain ;  
 Woe ! for chariots of fire  
 Shall fly without horses, free,  
 Under the earth, and above  
 Mountain and river and sea.

Woe ! woe to the land.

Woe ! woe to me.

[Exit Rachel, repeating "A voice from the east."

*I b to think this  
 should be a very  
 marked feature  
 of Rachel's part  
 as mystical as  
 possible.*

*Cromwell.* [*Rising from reverie.*—What sayest thou of that, Smite'em?  
*Smite'em.*—Verily, and 'twas a wondrous discourse, yea, full of wonder.

*Cromwell.* [*Resuming to write. Aside.*—The field is not yet clear;  
 My worthy friends, let me compute you fair.  
 I'll put it to you as you stand around.  
 The motion is that Cromwell shall be king.  
 Those who are for 't, say Aye. [*Reckons.*]  
 Rouse, Jephson, Pack, and their twenties. 'Tis a feeble Aye.  
 Those who oppose the motion, now say No.  
 Lambert and his lot! the knave he wants my place.

Pride! Well named is Pride;

I fain would tan his hide.

Fleetwood, Desborough, and their men! My own flesh and blood!  
 Vane, Sir Harry Vane, the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!  
 Greatorex, and the Ironsides.

*Smite'em.* [*Emphatically.*—No.

*Cromwell.*—You speak before you're asked. The Independents, No.  
 The Fifth Monarchy Men. No.  
 All no. The noes have it.

[*Takes up the Crown left by Rachel.*]

Come hither, fragile thing, that through the gap  
 Of long eared time hath worn so steadily.  
 Thou art a goodly thing to look upon;  
 Let's try thee on my brow.

[*Puts on the Crown, and going to the Looking-glass sees Smite'em cocking his Carbine.*]

[*To Smite'em, sharply.*—

What, in cold blood, brave Smite'em, wouldst thou do it?  
 In mine own house, on guard! I cannot think it.

*Smite'em.*—I wouldn't hurt a hair upon your head,  
 But when I see that mockery on your head  
 I fain would take it off.

*Cromwell.*—It were no easy thing to take the crown  
 And leave the head, my friend!

*Smite'em.*—Yea, verily, that once was tried, and failed.



*Cromwell.*—There is a bound which none shall cross with Cromwell,  
 I'll bear this carping insolence no more,  
 I'll——

[Removes the Crown from his head.]

*Enter Lady Claypole.*

*Lady Claypole.*—Father, may I have entrance ?

*Cromwell.*—Nay, nay, my own dear child, why ask so much ;  
 Hither, my love ; how dost thou feel to-day ?

*Lady Claypole.*—So well, so well, but you are pale and worn.

*Cromwell.*—I have been holding commune with the Spirit,  
 Asking shall I this bauble take and wear.

*Smite'em.* [*Aside.*]—That's a lie. He hath been reckoning up [his  
 friends and enemies, and trying if the thing would fit  
 his mop.

*Lady Claypole.*—Father, you have been ever dear to me,  
 And many things, nay everything I've asked,  
 Save one alone, you have bestowed on me ;  
 I may not ask your favours very long :  
 So this I pray in hope and certain trust—  
 Take not the Crown.

*Smite'em.* [*Aside.*]—Go on, Mrs. Betsy, I like that.

*Cromwell.*—Why pray you thus ?

*Lady Claypole.*—For you, for me, for all of us I pray.

Tear from your heart this vain idolatry, [*Pointing to Crown.*]  
 And bid the real Crown of England wait,  
 If there must be an English Crown again,  
 For brow less worthy. Oh ! let it not be said  
 That Cromwell fought and conquered, all for what ?  
 To hurl his Royal Cousin from the throne,  
 And mount into his seat ! Let not this hour,  
 Passing and fitful, sink us into shame,  
 But be to us through life, through endless time,  
 An hour of triumph and true majesty.  
 This, my last favour, humbly thus I ask.

[*Kneels.*]

*Cromwell.* [*To Smite'em*].—Light me a taper at my chamber lamp.

[*He lays the Crown on the hearth and sets fire to it.*]

Dear record of the glories of the past,  
Thus rise unseen into the mystic air.  
The subtle heads that brought thee forth in art,  
For subtler heads to wear thee, little thought  
The last who owned thee would despoil thee so.  
Thus doth all glory fade : burn, burn, old crest  
And emblem of the past. The time hath come  
When David's crown itself were out of date.  
Burn, burn, old crown : and in thy semblance rise  
Such sovereignty, that every man shall say,  
I am a king ! and no man more than I.

END OF ACT II.

## ACT III.

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SCENE I.—THE WAITING ROOM OF WHITEHALL FOR SUITORS.

THE ROOM IS WITHOUT FURNITURE, BUT DECORATED.

*Enter Cromwell with Lady Claypole.*

*Cromwell.*—Whatever thought, my child—

Whatever thought vainglorious and weak  
Held my frail heart, thou hast dispelled it from me.  
Like as the wind doth drive the sulphurous air  
From poisoned valley, thou hast cleansed my soul.  
I know it well, I once was found in grace,  
And once in grace is always; again I taste  
The holy promise. The everlasting hills  
Are not more fixed than grace is now in me.

*Lady Claypole.*—And how serenely doth the soul, assured  
Of its true resting-place, abide in peace.  
Then is the world a shadow, and our life  
A summer dream, disturbing us to wake  
To the perpetual day. We say to Death,  
Be our deliverer! To our bosom friends  
We give our love; and to our enemies,  
We would our lasting joy. We say to life,  
Keep with us, as he wists who gave it us,  
Praying therewith, that we may spend it well;  
Not in the gloom of sorrow without hope,  
But in the hope of gladness without sorrow,  
Here her dependent sister. Father, no crown  
That man or men can give, can equal that  
Which thou dost hold as thine, if thou but wait  
The hour it cometh; when the majesty  
Of heaven shall burst on thee; when thou shalt see  
What mortal eye could not behold and live,  
The universal light that lightens all;  
When thou shalt hear, what this thy mortal sense



Could not receive and live, the harmonies  
 Of million worlds, singing in one accord  
 Their song of wonder; when thou shalt feel,  
 What mortal heart could never feel and live,  
 The joy unspeakable, of endless being,  
 In endless knowledge; when thou shalt take  
 What mortal man could never take and live,  
 Thy throne amongst the blessed.

*Cromwell.*—My angel child, sure thou with foretaste sing'st,  
 This glorious home! I'll wander there with thee.

*Enter Members of the Court—Herbert Lee, Rachel and others,  
 Smite'em following.*

*Herbert Lee.*—My Lord, the Messenger of the House of Parliament  
 doth wait audience.

*Cromwell.*—Do my Lords and Members of the House assemble by this  
 time?

*Herbert.*—They do, my Lord, in the Banqueting Hall. They do  
 await your Highness.

*Cromwell.*—Knowest thou if Mr. Secretary Thurloe is in attendance.

*Herbert.*—I believe not your Highness. I do hear that Mr. Secretary  
 is unable to leave his room.

*Cromwell.*—Tut, tut! [*Herbert Lee is retiring, when Cromwell calls.*]

Herbert Lee! Herbert Lee! I would look on thee. [*To Rachel.*]  
 Rachel, dost thou in Herbert's face recall  
 One who was dear to us as our own life?

*Rachel.*—Yea, royal cousin, he doth bring to me  
 Thy own brave son, thy first-born Oliver,  
 Who in the hour of triumph met his doom.  
 The scene is fresh upon my mind as though  
 It were before me.

*Lady Claypole.*—I fain would hear it. Rachel, can'st thou tell it?

*Smite'em.*—I should think she could; I've heard her. I like that!

*Rachel.*—It was a hideous fight, the fight that day;  
 A glorious fight. Upon the bloody plain,  
 The men of sin, who stayed their certain fate,  
 We mowed as stubble to our feet. The rest,  
 Like the Amalekites, they shook and fled.

*Smite'em.*—I see'd 'em. I like that.

*Rachel*.—I, wearied out at last, for I had cried

From morn to noon the cry, "The sword of Gideon,"  
 Would fain have laid me on the earth and slept;  
 But that the wounded, in their mortal strife,  
 Called out for drink to soothe their parched tongues.  
 I moved among them, and with cordial cool  
 Did minister to them: at length I came  
 On one, whose youthful face, that morn, had shone  
 A sun amidst our hosts; and now he lay  
 As though in sleep, or in her sister death.  
 I raised him on my breast to give him drink,  
 And he did ope his eyes and kiss my cheek,  
 Then sank again upon my breast in peace.  
 I said, "Poor Oliver!" and would have closed  
 His pearly orbs for ever; when he moved,  
 And gazed in space and raised his ghostly hand,  
 As tho' far, far in space he did discern  
 What was not visible to mortal ken.  
 At last myself did see a cloud of dust,  
 Not bigger than one's hand. As it advanced,  
 Larger and larger on, his eyes lit up,  
 His face relaxed, and on it sat a smile  
 Like as on Gabriel's. They came! they came!  
 A crowd of mounted warriors: at their front  
 Their chosen leader, clothed in victory.  
 With tightened rein, lightening upon his brow,  
 He stood before us fixed as adamant.  
 Then he, upon my breast, struggling to rise,  
 Unbared his head, and waved his cap aloft,  
 And cried, in glory, with a voice that rang  
 Into the heavens above: "Father! again  
 The Lord is with us, and He is with me!  
 Resurgam!"

And thus he fell upon my breast once more;  
 Whispering, with icy breath and failing lip,  
 "Father! Resurgam!" and he e'en was dead.

*Cromwell*.—It went clean to my heart, it did, that scene.

Yea! like a dagger to my very heart.

That he evolved with almost divinely  
 or miraculously  
 Miss Glynne

Oh! stay, it yet will burst. Good friends, forgive  
 These scalding tears; nor think a leader weak. [*Weeps.*]  
 Who sheds them! for they are the outlets dear  
 Of weeping blood, and that is weeping life.  
 Our heart is easier! let us to our tasks  
 Return in triumph, strengthened by our woes;  
 Chastened, yet sanctified; pierced, yet prepared  
 To bear the more, knowing what can be borne. [*Exeunt Omnes.*]

*Enter Josh. Buckthorn, the Duke de Tours, and Leonine.*

*Josh.*—This room, nobles, is called his Highness' waiting room;  
 hither gather they who seek audience and await the pleasure.

*Duke.*—But Mr.—Honourable Mr. Butthorn—

*Josh.*—Buckthorn, please your Grace, not Butt, B U C K. [*Spells it.*]

*Duke.*—Ah! oui, him stag—Buck—him jump, ah! oui. [*Jumps.*]

*Josh.*—Your Grace doth gracefully do it, and truly. Excuse my interruption.

*Duke.*—N'importe, Honourable Mr. Buckthorn; dat right? ah! but  
 vy, if this be de waiting room; there be no couches?

*Josh.*—That, my Lord, implieth a long story, which to make short is  
 this. Once there were couches and chairs of all kinds, where-  
 upon visitors craving audience did sit all day and even all  
 night, which did discomfort my Lord much. So when Jack  
 Lilburne, him as was the leveller, and his friend, Lift-up-your-  
 voice Hornblower, did sit through three nights and were carried  
 out from fasting, His Highness did summon me to a con-  
 sultium, as he always doth on great affairs.

*Leonine.*—Bon, tres bon; he be a vise man.

*Josh.*—Très bien, my Lord; comprenez you. His Highness says  
 then to me, Honourable Joshua, in whatrespect, says he, in his  
 parable way, is a man unlike to a horse? Because he hath not  
 four legs and a tail, says I. Good, says his Highness, but that is  
 not my meaning. I mean, because he's not a standing animal.  
 Dost penetrate it, Honourable Joshua? says he. Highness,  
 replied I, dost thou mean that if all the suitors had to stand  
 until you could see them they would disperse? Like smoke out  
 of my pipe, said he. Shall be done, says I; and straightway I  
 cleared the room, as my Lords see.



*Duke.*—Vell ! and vat then ?

*Josh.*—My Lords, 'tis wonderful clever ; they come as many to see his Highness, and they come sooner, but they go. Clever thing. They can't stand standing a bit.

*Duke.*—Oui, oui—ver clever : but, Honourable Monsieur, ve would see also my Lord's own maison—house.

*Leonine.*—Apartments de son Altesse.

*Josh.*—I regret, Nobles, that cannot be. Since Sindercombe's plot, 'tis strictly forbidden that any stranger do enter my Lord's private rooms ; 'twas otherwise before—open house, as we say.

*Duke.*—Ah oui, open-house—oui—but ve see not demi de palace.

*Josh.*—Demi ! [*aside.*] if that be'ant swearing I'm wrong in my Gallic.

*Duke.*—I say, not demi of the palace ; one, two (*counting two fingers*)—dat is de palace—ve see demi, *von* only.

*Josh.*—Comprenez, your Grace : but I cannot do more myself, 'tis more than even I dare.

*Leonine.*—Be dere un volume of de palace, for you to lend to his Majes—his Grace de Duke de Tours ?

*Josh.*—That I can do ; if you will even abide here I will fetch one. His Highness did command me to show you great courtesy.

[*Exit Josh.*]

*De Tours.*—Art thou satisfied ?

*Leonine.*—Perfectly : 'twould have been well to have seen where the miscreant sleeps and the ways from the garden to his chamber ; but with a hint from that madcap who haunts the spot, we shall do : we shall do.

*Duke.*—I confess me still there is much hazard in the plot, and I like it not. Heard you not what was whispered last night in the circle, that the arch-traitor could, an he would, assassinate us all ; which he even would, were the example of attempt set him.

*Leonine.*—But this is not assassination ; it shall be most fair fight. He armed, always, will be ready ; and on which of us the lot shall fall, he armed also shall challenge to mortal combat, man to man. 'Tis but to meet him certainly alone ; kill or be killed. If we kill, we have all the power at our feet ; if we are killed 'twill be a bold death, as he will say, for with all his vices he is brave and admires bravery



*Duke.*—There is show of truth in your words; still doth the plot savour of assassination, and I like it not. It sounded well in France; in Whitehall 'tis coarse and ravenly.

*Leonine.*—It must be done. At this last hour, with everything prosperous to the event, the Crown of England taken by blood, must be restored by it. Your Grace falters no more.

*Duke.*—No more. I feel I am guided by men.

*Leonine.* [*Aside.*—Which means he would rather be guided by women, from whom, for once, we have enticed him. [*To Duke.*] Truly, Sire, you are guided by honest men who would die for you.

*Duke.*—Most certainly. Silence; here comes the honourable Joshua Buckthorn; Jack, should things ever come to pass, I'll have that fellow to laugh at, at any cost.

*Enter Josh.*

*Josh.*—My Lords, I cannot find the book; nor high nor low can I find it; 'tis most strange, I had it even in mine hand this hour.

*Enter Frances Cromwell.*

*Frances.*—What lookest thou for, Mr. Buckthorn?

*Josh.*—Ridge's History of the Palace, my Lady Frances, the which I would have lended my Lords, who, from his Eminence, come to his Highness.

*Frances.*—I' faith, good Sir, I am the offender, I have the book here, and will with much pleasure surrender it to our guests. I pray you, fair Lord, accept. [*To the Duke.*] [*Exit Frances.*

*Josh.*—'Tis her Highness Frances; 'tis said by some that if his Highness could bring about a match between her and Charles, yclept the King in France, he would even restore the Crown, and himself hold the army as Generalissimo.

*Duke.*—By de St. George and Dragon, dat be good, Mr. Butthorn.

*Josh.*—Buckthorn, B U C K, an please your Grace.

*Duke.*—Pardon, Mr *Buckthorn*, dat be admirable an idea.

*Leonine.* [*Aside.*—I must get him off, 'tis a weak point; alas! the weakest. [*To the Duke.*] My Lord, affairs of state of de vast moment fill de spirit and de body of de Honourable Monsieur; ve really, empressment, must go. [*Both to Josh.*] Adieu! Honourable Monsieur.

*Josh.*—Adieu! my noble Lords and Graces, adieu!

[*Exit all. Josh. on one side, Duke and Leonine on the other, walking backwards and bowing.*]

SCENE II.—THE BANQUETING HALL OF THE PALACE.

*Present the Members of the Parliament. (Sound of cannon heard.)* *Heralds and Trumpeters enter, followed by the Lord Protector in full state, surrounded by his Body Guard, Officers, and Council. As His Highness enters, the members rise. He takes his place on the Chair of State on the Dais. Smite'em is on guard at lower part of Hall.*

*Sergeant-at-Arms.*—His Highness doth command the House be seated.

[*Members take their seats.*] Silence! The Speaker!

*The Speaker.* [*Rising*].—My Lord Protector! may it please your Highness  
To hear from me, as Speaker of the House,  
The words and wishes of the Parliament?

*Cromwell.*—Whatever, Mr. Speaker, is the wish  
Of Parliament to speak, it is our wish,  
Nay, 'tis our duty, patiently to hear,  
And if it should be possible, obey.  
Gladly we testify that you are men  
Zealous in all good works; zealous to keep  
The two concerns greatest in this world—  
Religion free, and civil liberty.  
These things are Christianlike and honourable:  
They are provided for by you like men  
Like Christian men and men of purest honour,  
Like yourselves, *Englishmen*: I pray, proceed.

*The Speaker.*—My Lord, your gracious words would feed the dumb;  
And do encourage us to hope the best.  
I am commanded by the Parliament  
Of England, Scotland, Ireland, to lay this  
Humble petition and advice, before  
Your Highness for acceptance: I do know  
Most sensibly, that I do speak before  
So great a person; whose exactitude  
Of judgment, ought to scatter and to chase  
All speeches unrequired, quick as the sun

Doth chase the vapours. Happily for me,  
 I am a servant only : not a man  
 To vent my own conceits, but to declare  
 The things I bear in command from the House.  
 I am, in simile, a gardener  
 Who gathers flowers in his master's garden,  
 And out of them a nosegay straightway makes.  
 I offer nothing but what I have culled  
 In the fair garden of the Parliament.

*Smite'em.*—I hate that.

[*Brings his carbine down smartly.*]

*Serjeant-at-Arms.*—Silence!

*Smite'em.*—I like that.

*Cromwell.*—We would have silence, while the Commons' House

Doth through its Speaker tell to us its will.

There are some guards want guards upon their tongue :

They are too full of honesty to hold

A decorous peace; and though their aim is good,

They do sometimes, in haste, mistake a friend,

And lodge their charge in him. I pray, proceed. [*To Speaker.*]

*The Speaker.*—My Lord, I much regret a single word,

That falls from me, should give or prove offence

To any tender conscience here to-day.

I will proceed to state the Commons' vote

As here contained. It doth include, in all

Eighteen provisions : some of minor point

I will not urge in detail : ~~some, a few~~ *one*

*my* Of weightier moment, must be strongly urged. *W.H.*

~~We would the public revenue were placed~~

~~On a fixed basis, broad and permanent.~~

[*Cheers.*]

~~We would that our religion, Protestant,~~

~~For which the holy martyrs burned their blood:—~~

~~Ridley and Latimer, and other saints,—~~

~~By hundreds counted, who lit up the stake:—~~

~~That this religion, nobly Protestant,~~

~~Should have exclusive right and rule with us.~~ [*Loud cheers.*]

*Smite'em.*—I like that.

*The Speaker.*—Yet would we add, for tender consciences,

A saving clause : that every man may feel

*Mr Phelps would have cut off the lines around Mr. H., as to get at refusal of crown at once.*



~~He may protest, and worship as he wills :  
His own heart guiding him, and he himself  
Nursing no plot to change the common law  
By Parliament affirmed. [Cheers.]~~

~~We would another House of Parliament,  
Thus to be named and called "the other House"  
Be instituted forthwith; by such plan,  
As to your Highness may seem most secure.~~

[Assent and disapprobation.]

*Before*

~~Lastly~~, your Highness, we do humbly pray,  
That, as the common bond and seal of all,  
The knot of unity, the end of strife,  
The block to wanton pride; you will restore  
The ancient kingship in your own great name.

*Smite' em*,—I'll fetch John Bunyan.

*John Bunyan*. [*From the crowd*.]—John Bunyan stands to listen for himself.

He will hear Oliver before he speaks  
The mind he holds.

*The Speaker*.—I have now done, my Lord, with what do make  
The pieces of this act, but not with it.  
The Parliament doth hold in such esteem  
This frame of Government, in every part,  
It humbly prays you to accept it all.  
The parts unite and fit, and are as one;  
Take out but one, and loosened is the whole.  
With all its heart, with loyalty, with love,  
The House doth offer it, my Lord, and hopes  
Your Highness, in like manner, will receive.  
The parts are children of the common mother,  
The Parliament of England. We expect  
Your Highness will adopt them, one and all.  
"Aut nihil aut totum dabit."

*Cromwell*. [*Rising*].—Sir Thomas Widdrington, my Lords, my friends,—  
I am a man who standeth in a place,  
Which place I undertook, not with the hope  
Of doing good, so much as to prevent

*Bunyan that he outbids the  
crowd. L.C.C.*



Mischiefs and evils that were imminent,  
 And would have led to shedding of more blood.  
 For me, I knew my calling from the first.  
 I was a person who, from first employment,  
 Was suddenly preferred. From little trusts  
 I rose to greater. I did labour hard  
 Best to discharge my trusts: and Heaven therein  
 Did bless me as it pleasèd it to bless.  
 In a plain way, a foolish, simple way,  
 As many great and wise and good men judg'd,  
 I strove to make my instruments support me.  
 I spoke to Hampden, my most worthy friend.  
 Your troops, I said, are tapsters, serving men:  
 Spirits so mean and base cannot encounter  
 Men that have resolution, courage, honour.  
 You must get men of spirit, gentlemen,  
 Or you will still be beaten, e'en as now.  
 He answered me: The notion it was good,  
 But quite impracticable. I replied:  
 I could do something in't. And truly, Sirs,  
 Impute the success to what cause you please,  
 I raised up men who made such conscience work  
 Of what they did, that they were never turned,  
 But wheresoe'er they fought they fought to win.  
 I will apply this to our present task.  
 Such men as I have named do still exist,  
 No worldly carnal spirit beats them down;  
 They stand alone in their integrity,  
 And I could not with any justice grieve them.  
 These, faithful to the great things of the State,  
 To perfect liberty; these swallow not  
 The title you would give. Nor do I see  
 Why the word king be forced; and four poor letters  
 Instead of five or more or less, be set  
 To make the word. The true significance  
 Goes to the thing itself, not to the name.  
 Truly I say it, since I held this place  
 By other name, though I would not be vain,  
 There hath been no demur. Obedience  
 Is all but universal from all ranks:  
 Nor in the halcyon days of peace themselves,  
 Days of Elizabeth, and James to Charles,  
 Hath there been freer procedure of law.  
 My Lords the Judges here might tell us more.\*

[Cromwell resumes his seat.]

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\* This speech of Cromwell and the subsequent speech of Lord Broghill are both historical, but they are not essential to the progress of the play, and may be left out in the representation, to save time, if it be necessary.

[*Enter Fleetwood, Desborough, Greatorrex, and large body of Officers of Republican Army; they march to the table, afterwards taking their seats on each side, Greatorrex presents a petition to Cromwell.*]

*Greatorrex.*—

Highness!

I am commissioned by these worthy men,  
Who by your side have fought for liberty;  
Who with your aid have cut down kingly pride:  
At this decisive moment, to submit  
Their thought and will to you. To Parliament  
They have already made their wishes known.

*Serjeant-at-Arms.*—Silence for my Lord Broghill.

*Lord Broghill.*—May it please your Highness,  
The Commons' House have heard to-day with joy,  
That to your Highness' mind this settlement  
Doth in its many parts sound wise and good.  
Would they could hear that it in every part  
Did have your equal grace. To me belongs  
The charge to urge the part which seems to you  
Of lesser moment; but which seems to us  
The one essential one connecting link  
To bind the whole. Your Highness! I do feel  
I speak with terror, lest the task I brave  
Do fail through me: so well am I assured  
It can but fail from lack of skill in me.  
I pray you therefore, in your clemency  
Hear me, believing, all that I shall say  
Doth not present one half that could be said.

We humbly think the word, the title, *King*  
Is that the law doth notice as the name  
Of the chief magistrate, and that none other  
Hath ever been accepted. On this we urge  
That old foundations that are good, are better  
Than new foundations, which, though quite as good,  
Have not been tried by us. Those acts and rules  
Which time and ripe experience confirm  
Carry with them the surest proof of worth.  
The stamp and the authority they bear  
Gives them solidity and majesty.

We urge that it is better for the man  
Who rules, as the first magistrate, to fit  
The laws that now exist and are in force,  
Than that the laws be made to fit to him.

We humbly urge that this free Parliament,  
 Elected by the people, is the people,  
 And that the Parliament hath well bethought  
 The title which is good, and hath declared  
 In solemn meeting, that the title, King,  
 Will most define the ruler of the State.  
 That by such name, the people will to him  
 Know best their duty ; and he his to them ;  
 According to our known and ancient laws.

We would suggest that all who own the laws,  
 Know only those which come from times now past,  
 Or those which you, my Lord, have made for us  
 By the advice and voice of Parliament.  
 If therefore you accept the title, King,  
 Your laws and your authority will graft  
 On what has been, and all who think it right  
 And proper to obey the former laws,  
 Not less than those now made, will be content.

Once more, my Lord, if you reject this name,  
 Will not the faint hopes of our enemies  
 Be bolstered up thereby ? will they not say  
 That he whom they do recognise, is known  
 Not only by the ancient title, *King*,  
 Which all past Parliaments have recognized,  
 But by the name your Parliament doth own ?  
 Will they not say that you refuse to take,  
 From fear of faction, or from mean distrust,  
 The title, which the house that you have called,  
 Doth pray you to assume, with all its heart.

My Lord, we plead to you by law itself  
 To take this title : that you be secure  
 In your great office, and do make secure  
 Those who do truly serve you. When the king,  
 Henry the Seventh, did ascend the throne,  
 An Act was passed, making a full provision  
 That he who served whoever was the king,  
 Should be secure forthwith. Our enemies  
 Have claimed indemnity by this same act ;  
 Thus are they tied by it ; and we do pray  
 Bring them by it to your authority.  
 The law is rational ; it doth provide  
 Not for this family, this man, or that,  
 But for the peace and safety of the people :  
 That they are safe if they obey the King  
 The Parliament shall choose. If then, my Lord,  
 The title and the office of the King  
 Be vested in your Highness, and the people  
 Under your reign enjoy their rights in peace,

'Twere madness for them to cast off their peace,  
But to obtain the same in strife and blood,  
Under another and less noble King.

Further, my Lord, at present there exists  
No stronger barrier than a weak divorce  
Between the man who claims to be the King  
And the imperial crown. But we all know,  
That those who have been legally divorced  
Have sometimes wed again. I pray, my Lord,  
Cut off all hope of this ; marry the crown !

Lastly, your Highness, let me leave with you  
The strongest and most potent argument :  
That this advice doth come from Parliament,  
And therewith from our England as a whole :  
A Parliament that oft hath given proof  
Of its affection to your Highness' person ;  
And which, if listened to in this regard,  
Will give you, proof on proof, it loves you more.

[*Sits down. Loud cheers from Parliament and grave dissent from the officers.*]

*Cromwell.*—Mr. Speaker.

I have, the best I can, in my own thoughts  
Revolved this business. I think this is an act  
That doth provide for every honest man  
Security in that great liberty  
Of faith and nature, which we signalize  
As liberty of conscience.  
These are the great and fundamental rules  
By which all nations that would last must live.  
I testify to them as thoughts, and things,  
And products, worthy of the Parliament.  
I only have unhappiness in this,  
That, in my many conferences with you,  
That, in my many searchings of myself,  
I cannot be convinced, in my own heart,  
Of the necessity which you declare  
That I should take the ancient title, *King*.  
With honour and respect to you, I own,  
No private judgment should be weighed with that  
Which comes from Parliament. But in respect  
To things affecting persons, every man



Who feels he must account himself to Heaven,  
 Must prove his work, and have the work approved  
 By his own conscience. He must adjudge  
 That which he is to do or to forbear.  
 Therefore, whilst you are granting liberties  
 To other men, you surely to myself  
 Will not deny this liberty, nay, duty ;—  
 And such a duty I should sin to waive it—  
 That I examine my own heart of hearts,  
 My thoughts and judgments, in each work of mine,  
 I set my hand unto or answer for.  
 I do confess me, then, upon such test,  
 That did I answer to your expectation  
 As you would wish, I doubtingly  
 Should answer to you ; and what is of doubt  
 Is not of faith ; and what is not of faith  
 Is sin in him that doth it, wittingly.  
 I, lying under this consideration,  
 Think it my duty, without more delay,  
 To give the House, which hath upon me laid  
 So many obligations, this my answer.  
 That though I think the act of Government  
 Is excellent in all, except one part,—  
 The title as to me ; I were not honest  
 Did I not tell you I cannot accept  
 Of Government, its trouble and its charge,  
 Under the name and title of THE KING.  
 This is mine answer to this weighty business.

*[Loud cheers from the Officers. Sound of trumpets, followed by sound of distant cannon.]*

END OF ACT III.

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A GRAND ROOM OF STATE IN WHITEHALL,  
MAGNIFICENTLY FURNISHED.

*Present Cromwell and John Milton.*

*Cromwell.*—And thine eyes, Milton: do they fail thee more?

*Milton.*—Nor more nor less; they let no ray of light  
Illumine me.

*Cromwell.* [*Moving to where Milton sits*].—Let me view them.  
The globes are perfect and the windows clear.  
A day of knowledge will in time arrive  
When eyes like thine will be unsealed again.

*Milton.*—'Twould savour of a miracle.

*Cromwell.*—All knowledge newly born is miracle;  
'Tis fresh to us, and therefore, wonderful.  
When first our children try to speak, and take  
The inventories of their tiny worlds,  
We wonder and admire. But when they grow  
To perfect manhood, though they then do speak,  
And think, and act, with a much finer sense,  
We wonder not. The miracle has ceased.  
It is a miracle that thou thyself,  
With eyes that give no entrance to the world,  
Should by thy mental sight see more than earth.  
The vastnesses above, the depths below.  
Spirits sublimely unapproachable,  
Yet visible, through thee, who lifts the veil.  
The Gods of Christendom, their names, their ways,  
Their thoughts and words, and deeds of peace and war.  
Battles of angels, and angelic songs  
Encrystallized before us; so that we,  
Mortals of mortals, are conveyed beyond  
Our mortal spheres, and with th' immortals breathe.

*Milton.*—Oh, my Lord! my Lord!

*Cromwell.*—Touched I thee, friend! truly I did but wander;  
 Yet t'was an honest and a pleasant wandering.  
 Why, man! thy sightless orbs are filled with tears :  
 Go, take thy old apartments for to night,  
 And do thy musings in the gardens here.  
 Our daughter Claypole longs to talk with thee.

*Enter Josh. Buckthorn.*

*Josh.* [ *To Milton.* ]—Sir, I do bring a message from her Highness,  
 that she does trust you will sup with the company to night.

*Cromwell.* [ *To Josh.* ]—Tell Her Highness Mr. Milton is already  
 invited and doth come. [ *Exit Josh.* ]

[ *To Milton.* ] No duties hold you from us ?

*Milton.*—No; but a letter must be writ again  
 Respecting the Waldenses. I would like  
 Your thoughts upon it.

*Cromwell.*—Dictate a letter in the noble strain,  
 Thou know'st so well : repeat what thou hast said  
 That England bleeds whenever martyrs cry.  
 Let firmness mingle with thy courtesy,  
 And bid each Potentate know without stint,  
 That if our friendly words should fail their mark,  
 Our potent cannon, on the seven hills,  
 Shall preach to Rome herself, with such a voice,  
 That Rome shall pray for what she never gave,  
 Mercy to the oppressed!

*Milton.*—I'd lose restorèd sight to hear thy voice  
 Speaking through cannon at the gates of Rome.

*Cromwell.*—And I my life : but I have struck so hard  
 The nations tremble at my very word.  
 Milton, a man may even be too strong.  
 Weak through his very strength. I am that man.  
 I would lay down my life to scatter Rome,  
 Yet cannot find pretence to touch a thing,  
 So abject to my power.

*Enter Herbert Lee.*

*Milton.*—Here comes my friendly guide. I know his step.

*Cromwell.*—And a brave guide, he is, I do assure you.

I've tried his pluck, and he doth stand the fire.

Lead on with care, my Herbert: 'tis but few

Have such a task of honour. [*Exit Milton led by Herbert Lee.*

[*Cromwell left alone and falling into reverie, hears a voice singing under the window. He rises, and going to the window, listens. Charles Harfleur is heard to sing.*]

Oh, the May flower ship is the ship for me;  
Come love, come.

Where the flashing stream rolls into the sea,  
I will sing of her deeds, love; sing to thee.  
Wilt thou come?

I'll sing how she strayed from her sea-bounded nest;  
Come love, come.

I'll sing how she found in the deep red west  
For the freedman's burden a free-man's rest.  
Wilt thou come?

I'll show thee the spot where the pilgrims prayer,—  
Come love, come—

Blessèd the earth and made it bear  
First fruits of freedom and knowledge fair.  
Wilt thou come?

I'll show thee a place twix't earth and sky,—  
Come love, come—

Where the mortal echoes the angel's cry;  
Where to love is to live, and to hate is to die.  
Wilt thou come?

[*Song ceases.*]

*Cromwell.*—Rollicking fool, I would thine art were mine.

And thine heart too. Music however wild

Thou com'st to us, thou com'st as nothing else.

In tramp of war thou lift'st the soldier's step

To deathly glory: thou the poet leads.

And here the lover, wanton of desire,

Thou doth subdue to fervid honesty.

*Enter Gentlemen of the Court: Lord Broghill, Sir Thomas Widdrington, and many others. Josh. and Smite'em follow.*

*Cromwell.*—My Lords and gentlemen; we greet you all.

We will relax awhile, indeed we will.

If any noble Lord will set a back

We'll play at leap-frog up to Charing Cross.



*Josh.*—My Lord, it doth not seem that any one here, noble or unnoble, hath a back.

*Cromwell.*—But there beeth one at least hath a front, and a brazen front too. [*To Josh.*] Come forward man, and show us thy front; if we can put a sword through it we will. Let us fence.

*Josh.*—Me! My Lord, I pray you!

*Cromwell.*—'Tis too late to pray; trust to your rapier, Sir. Now.

[*Cromwell and Josh. put themselves in position for fencing. Cromwell throws his sword over his back as if to make a straight down cut.*]

Man, I could clip thy body clean atwain  
And leave one half a-laughing at the other.

*Smite'em.*—It's true as Golgotha; I've see'd him do it.

*Josh.*—My Lord, I'll take the promise for the deed;  
I fear my better half might not admire it.

*Enter Mrs. Buckthorn.*

*Mrs Buckthorn.* [*Rushing forward.*]—Oh, horror! What do I see? My Joshua being made a cleft stick? Oh, my Lord! my Highness! [*Falling at the feet of Cromwell.*] If this judgment of Solomine must be perpetooated, let me be the babe. But spare the honourable J. B., he is of such light and tender build.

*Cromwell.*—Well, mother, for a moment he is spared. But his time is come. Saw you not his hand was raised against ourselves.

*Mrs. Buckthorn.* [*To Josh.*]—Honourable Joshua, thou wert always a fool; but I'll die with thee, Joshua, nevertheless. Our heads shall garnish the same pole. Courage, sweet jilly-flower, we are both orphans, and we shan't be missed. [*Weeps.*]

*Cromwell.*—Confound the foolish old woman, she is actually crying; cheer up, mother, he is all safe. Did'nt you see it was fun?

*Josh.*—All fun, my beloved.

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—I don't like such fun. Honourable J. B., give me your sword! [*Josh. gives up his sword.*]

*Cromwell.*—The old Buck surrenders to a gallant enemy. I tell thee what, mother, if thou wert twenty years younger I'd plant a kiss on those pouters of thine

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—And not the first time neither, Highness Oliver. Don't you remember when you were at Huntingdon school how you came behind me in Beard's paddock, and made me upset the pail, and then said it was the cow's tail switched me?—as if I should'nt know the difference atwixt a pair of young man's lips and a cow's tail—and got yourself well birched for it too. Oh you bad young man. But I was sorry for you, Highness, indeed I was, and I tried to double milk all the cows to make up the loss, only they would'nt stand it. My Lords, honourables, and noble sirs, [*Courtseying*] this is a true story, and I am glad my Joshua knows it at last.

*Josh.* [*Valiantly.*—Give me back my sword.

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—Not till your blood is frosted, Honourable Joshua : I know you.

*Cromwell.* [*Who has been convulsed with laughter.*—Bravo, old woman, I was thy first love, I believe, and i' truth I remember me the birching to this day. It cooled me, mother; but it made Joshua.

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—It did, Highness, which proves my Lords, honourables, and noble sirs, [*Courtseying*] the saying: that one man's birch may be another man's perch.

*Cromwell.*—Capital! capital! mother; capital! If we had music, you and I would do a dance.

*Smite'em.* [*Walking round.—Aside.*—I'll tell Creatorex; I'll tell Lizabeth Cromwell; I'll tell John Bunyan; I'll tell everybody. I'll have no dancing bears in this show. March! Bang!

*Cromwell.*—Well, now, my Lords and gentlemen, let us diversify with a little business. [*Calls.*] Smite'em-on-the-cheek Colman, where are you?

*Smite'em.*—Verily, I am at my post.

*Cromwell.*—Gentlemen, do you see this coxcomb. I hate him for a rascal, I do indeed; so I am going to give him a lesson. Read that, Smite'em, read it man. [*Hands a commission.*] My Lords and gentlemen, the paper giveth Captain Smite'em his full commission with command of one hundred chosen men.

*Smite'em.*—March! Bang! I'm a Centoorian. I like that. When may I begin, General?

*Cromwell.*—Begin what?

*Smite'em.*—To smite, General. What's the use of being a Centoorian if you can't smite? I hate that.

*Cromwell.*—Oh, the time will come, faithful old boy; the time will come. Drill your men ready; that is enough now.

*Smite'em.*—I'll drill'em. March!

*Cromwell.*—Mother Buckthorn, go thou now into the palace and send us a wine cup that we may baptize the Captain. [*Exit Mrs. Buckthorn.*]  
Gentlemen, will you smoke?

*All.*—Aye, aye.

*Cromwell.*—Fill then your pipes. Joshua, hast thou learned the art?

*Josh.*—Truly, my Lord, I have not.

*Cromwell.*—Thou shalt then have thy maiden pipe. Here it is loaded well: sit down  
[*Josh sits and essays to smoke.*]

*Josh.*—My Lord, methinks I swallow the smoke. My Lord, it comes through my nose. My Lord, it escapeth by my ears. My Lord, it ascendeth into my brain. It sends me giddy, my Lord.  
[*Enter Mrs. Buckthorn with wine.*]

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—Honourable J. B., make not an ass of thyself, give me the pipe.

*Josh.*—I will, beloved, for a cup of wine.

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—Sweet breathing honeysuckle take the wine.

[*Gives wine.*]

*Cromwell.*—The old Buck capitulates. Now then, gentlemen, to baptize the Captain. Captain Colman, your health and further promotion?

*All.*—[*Taking wine.*] Captain Colman's health and further promotion.

*Smite'em.*—General Nolliver, your health. Gentlemen, your healths.

Mother Buckthorn, yours. March. [*Drinks.*] I like that.

[*Drinks.*] Bang! Centoorian, your health. [*Drinks.*]

Captain Colman, your health. [*Drinks.*] Smite'em-on-the-

cheek Colman, your health up to his time as a private

soldier. [*Drinks.*] March! Bang! I like that.

*Cromwell.*—Let's play Crambo. Joshua, give a word.

*Josh.*—Jeremy White.

*Cromwell.*—

The happy wight,  
We fixed him tight,  
With Deborah Stand-up-right.

Now, I'll give a word. "Cousin Waller,"

*Josh.* If he were taller.  
*A Courtier.* He wouldn't be smaller.  
*Cromwell.* Nor less of a brawler.  
*Smite'em.* That's a mauuler.

Now, I'll give my word.

Bang!  
*Cromwell.* Twang!  
*A Courtier* Fang!  
*Mrs. Buckthorn* Sang!  
*Josh.* Clang!

*Enter Herbert Lee showing in Lady Frances Cromwell and the Ladies of the Court.* [Exit Herbert]

*Cromwell* — My Lords and gentlemen, the entrance of our ladies doth mean the abandonment of our pipes.

[To ladies, bowing.] We welcome you with all our heart.

[To Smite'em aside.] Go thou, good captain, led by Joshua here, to our own room, where thou wilt find thy new uniform, the which mayest thou wear only so short a time as may be requisite for thy further promotion. Thou wilt return at once.

*Smite'em.*—Yea, verily. [Exit Josh. and Smite'em.]

*Enter Herbert Lee bringing in a body of Musicians.*

*Herbert.*—My Lord Protector, the musicians, whom you commanded, do present themselves to your Highness.

*Cromwell.* [To musicians.] You also are most welcome. I trust you bring with you some novelties.

*First Musician.*—Indeed, my Lord, 'tis so long since your Highness did command us, we have had time to practice many things. We have a madrigal set to the song of "May Morning," by Mr. Milton; an allmaine; a pavine; a corantoe; a seraband; and a new fashioned thing much like a seraband, only it has more conceit in it, and in a manner speaks its name, which is, "Tattle de Moy;" a solo for the viol, and—

*Cromwell.*—Stay, stay, Sir, you perplex us with your numbers, we will have the madrigal first. Come, my dear friend. [To Milton, who re-enters led by Herbert Lee] let me conduct thee to a seat, and let us enjoy together thine own words in music. [To the



*Company*] Friends all, I pray you be seated. [*To First Musician*] We are ready, Sir. [*Musicians sing the Madrigal*].

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,  
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her  
The flowery May, who from her green lap, throws  
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.  
Hail bounteous May, that dost inspire  
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;  
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,  
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing,  
Thus we salute thee with our early song,  
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

[*Applause, his Highness leading it.*]

*Cromwell*.—Who has set this to music?

*First Musician*.—One John Hatton, my Lord, a modest young artist, and painstaking. He hath writ all the music for this occasion.

*Cromwell*.—Nay, truly sir, if our poor judgment be worth anything, he hath genius, and doth approach the master whose words he hath set to melody. We wish him all the honour he doth so richly deserve. Now then, for an instrumental piece.

*First Musician*.—Would your Highness like a pavine?

*Cromwell*.—Aye, indeed, 'tis grave, sober, full of art and profundity. I like a pavine. [*The musicians tune their instruments*]. [*To Milton*]. I enjoy the tuning of instruments more than most men; it whets the appetite and excites wonder: or, as thou would'st put it, 'tis the chaos from which order is to be brought forth.

*Milton*.—Truly so.

*First Musician*.—We are attuned, my Lord.

*Cromwell*. And our best sense is keen.

If there be here a master, who can make  
Fine music on a single instrument,  
The dulcimer, the viol, the bassoon,  
Trumpet or hautboy, or whate'er you please,  
Let him a prelude play: so that into  
The rivulet of melody he starts  
You may pour in your strains, until you make  
A very torrent of sweet harmonies.

[*The musicians opening with a solo play a pavine. As they are coming to a close, re-enter Herbert Lee, Smite'em in his new uniform, and Josh. Herbert waits until the music and applause ceases*].

*Cromwell* [*To musicians*] Oh you bewitching crew !

You lift us from ourselves ; you raise our life

From bad to very good ; from grief to joy.

I wonder not the poets seize on you,

To fill the vault above with ministers

Of that perennial feast of happiness,

They picture for the worn out of the earth.

*Herbert*.—A despatch for your Highness.

*Cromwell*. [*Opening and reading despatch hastily*].—Gentlemen, our mirth must cease ; here is news I would you all knew the meaning of.

*All*. [*Gathering round*].—What is it, my Lord.

*Cromwell*.—To those who know it, *everything* ; to those who do not, *nothing*. [*Puts despatch in his pocket. To Smite-em. Aside.*]

Go arm thy troop, and set it quick on guard.

All round the palace.

*Smite-em*.—Yea, verily.

[*Exit.*]

*Cromwell*.—Now, worthy friends, I know you all would know

The cunning of this scrip. I'll tell you then.

Our worthy wife would see you in to sup ;

A good despatch forsooth for hungry souls.

We'll do Her Highness justice ere we part.

[*To Milton*].—My Milton, you and I will lead the way.

[*He offers his arm to Milton.*]

Musicians play your jig—"Tattle de Moy."

'Twill cheer us on our march, to our good cheer.

[*Musicians play. Exeunt omnes. Scene closes.*]

## SCENE II.—THE PORCH OF A HOSTEL NEAR WHITEHALL.

*Enter De Tours and Leonine in disguise as Falconers.*

*De Tours*.—Well, and what progress ?

*Leonine*.—All fair, Sire, the lot hath fallen on me. Be you away at once ; make for your vessel and get on board. If all goes well a hundred messengers will call you back. If things

go ill I have arranged for escape, be I not killed in the encounter. Here be the list of friendly houses will give you shelter. There is your pet hawk. [*Gives hawk.*]

*De Tours.*—Ah, friendly bird, thou once did'st serve me well. I'll trust to thee again. By holy George thou shalt be our device; thou crystal eye! Thou proud necked pecker! Wheu! wheu! thou art in haste. Get on my shoulder then. [*To Leonine.*]  
This adventure must be tried?

*Leonine.*—It must be done, not tried.

*De Tours.*—What is your part?

*Leonine.*—My Liege, 'twere better you knew nothing and bore nothing save your own part. Sexby hath meted out mine.

*De Tours.*—So, so. Then will I bear it well.

*Leonine.*—You hold the right divine, the surest hold.

I kiss your hand in pledge of perfect faith,

And pray you only leave me to my task.

*De Tours.*—Farewell. It must be. Farewell. Now, hawkie, let's you and I go find another oak. Good bye.

[*Exit into Hostel.*]

*Leonine.*—Why do I serve this man? Would he serve me?

'Tis said a Stuart never served a friend,

But has a motto, serve your enemies;

Win them, and you are safe; your friends are won.

I do not serve a man, I serve a cause.

Here comes the mad-cap Harfleur. I must save

Him from the scaffold, even if I fall.

*Enter Charles Harfleur.*

*Charles.*—Here I come, old sadness. I've had what the Puritans call a signal delivery. There was I singing my Nora a song, when from a window under hers, pops out the head of old Noll himself. I didn't care, I finished, and he never said a word. He has company to-night.

*Leonine.*—Has he?

*Charles.*—Yes, he has; and a hundred soldiers are posted round the palace. But the password is the same. Let me see. [*Looks at a tablet.*] Yes, "Lebanon;" that is it. How about my ship?

*Leonine.*—She is safe: thou hast but to get to her side and thou art clear away. The horses are ready; and a room is here prepared for thy lady till, without being noticed, ye may depart.

*Charles.*—Let us within, and o'er a friendly glass  
Discuss our future.

*Leonine.*—With all my heart; but I must soon to bed.

[*Exeunt. Scene closes.*]

SCENE III.—THE CHAMBER OF MR. SECRETARY THURLOE.

*Present.*—*Thurloe (on a Couch) and Cromwell.*

*Cromwell.*—I have advices from Sir Richard Willis,  
That on this very night a bold attempt,  
Well planned and skilful, will be made on me.

*Thurloe.*—I think it most improbable, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—I never knew him wrong, and I shall take  
Such care as doth become a hunted man;  
Cromwell they shall not find asleep to night.

*Thurloe.*—Sir Richard Willis is an honest spy;  
But sometimes he is led, by signs and words  
Of little moment, to believe too much.  
In all professed suspects this is a fault.

*Cromwell.*—I doubt him not; what others do not see,  
Or will not see mayhap, he gathers straight.  
Now hear, with bated breath, what more he says.

[*Reads.*] “The Prince himself has five days since landed, and, with one follower only a youth of great courage and full of romance, is not far from you. I could deliver them into your hands; but ’twere better to frustrate their plot, let them escape and seize them, as they may easily be seized, at Breda. The youth, a Scotchman, assumes a French name.”

[*He hears a gentle breathing behind a screen. Aside.*]

What’s that? what’s that? Willis doth say a friend  
Whom I have trusted is in this concealed.

Is an assassin there? [*To Thurloe.*]

Thurloe, what lays thee on thy couch so close?



*Thurloe.*—My ancient enemy, the gout, my Lord.

*Cromwell.*—I would I had none worse; there seems one near.

Villain! behind that screen there's one concealed.

I am prepared: I'll pin him to his perch.

[*Draws his dagger and makes towards the screen. Thurloe rising from his couch in pain, and seizing Cromwell's dress.*]

My Lord, I pray you be not madly rash.

'Tis Samuel Morland, my most worthy clerk,

Who after labour of two days and nights,

All in your Lordship's cause, doth sleep a watch.

*Cromwell.*—He hath heard every word that hath been said.

I'll silence him: I'll pin him to his perch.

[*Struggling to the screen, and still held by Thurloe, he pushes the screen aside, and discovers Morland asleep. He raises his hand to strike.*]

He shall not tell: I'll pin him to his perch.

*Enter Rachel behind.*

*Rachel.* [*In deep whisper.*—Thou shalt do no murder.

*Cromwell.* [*In terror, drops his dagger, and staggers as if in darkness.*]

When rank suspicion fills the jaded mind

The devil enters with an easy gait,

And conscience knuckles to necessity.

Necessity, said I? Not so, not so.

Nature did never of necessity

Let good and strong men fall to damnèd sin.

Now do I know the depth of my despair,

By this foul crime which I, in thought have done

If not in deed. The learned say my pulse

Hath intermittent beat: the soul doth do it.

Oh! it will stop. It is a coward's pulse

Moved by a guilty heart. Oh sin! oh fool!

To be a sinner! go and hang thyself.

[*Moving as if to escape wildly, he encounters Rachel.*]

*Rachel.* [*Raising her hands.*—Thou shalt do no murder.

ACT V.

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SCENE I.—THE GARDENS AT WHITEHALL IN THE EARLY  
DAYBREAK.

*Present Charles Harfleur and Nora.*

*Charles.*—They who have ceased to love have ceased to live,  
Or at their best have e'en begun to die.  
That was the gist and burthen of my song.

*Nora.*—And thou, thou wayward, wandering, wilful boy,  
Canst really rest and link thy life with mine?  
Canst leave the old companions of thy heart  
For me, a lonely girl? and when they jeer,  
Without a blush of shame canst say "I love."

*Charles.*—Ashamed of love? bid me then be ashamed  
Of the great fount of love; bid me lie down  
Hopeless and savage, like a growling cur  
That eats and sleeps, and wakes and eats again.  
His happiness completed in the round.

*Nora.*—I doubt thee not; yet 'tis so sweet to hear  
Thy protestation, I could have it said  
Till I did grieve that I did weary thee.

*Charles.*—Why should we hope to live beyond the grave  
If love be not immortal? Nora, believe  
That Heaven's gate admits no traveller  
Who fails to bring from earth this passport, love.  
That Heaven in all its vast infinitudes,  
Of space, of time, of beauty, and of rest,  
Hath not a point so large as shall permit  
The soul that loves not!

*Nora.*—I feel 'tis true, yea! every word 'tis true.  
But speak thou low, for my attunèd ear  
Doth tell of some approach; and we must part.

*Charles.*—'Tis not for many hours : when thou com'st forth  
 As is thy wont, to fetch thy lady flowers,  
 I will be ready with my trusty band.  
 A friendly priest will meet us on our way,  
 And in a holy place will join our hands.  
 Our purse is good, our steeds are swift of foot,  
 Our vessel ready and our future clear.

*Nora.*—Here the intruder comes ; hold ! do not fly.  
 He cannot see us but could hear us move  
 The faintest step away : 'tis the blind man,  
 Milton, who writes so much in prose and rhyme.  
 Before the sun he rises, and alone,  
 In favorite haunts, doth take his early walk,  
 Musing and speaking to himself his lines.  
 Hark ! as he passes us he thus dost speak.

*Milton.* [*Passing repeats.*]

“ And chiefly, Thou, O Spirit ! that dost prefer,  
 “ Before all temples, the upright heart and pure,  
 “ Instruct me— \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \* “ What in me is dark  
 “ Illumine : what is low raise and support ;  
 “ That to the heighth of this great argument,  
 “ I may assert Eternal Providence,  
 “ And justify the ways of Heaven to men.

*Charles.*—It is a prayer sublime, sublimely prayed.  
 I'll ne'er forget it : see you, he doth make  
 Back to the palace straight.

*Nora.*—Yes ! he forgets the haunt ; 'tis a long time  
 Since he had lodging here ; and so he fears  
 Lest he should be confused and lose his path.  
 But now I hear another foot approach,  
 Bearing this time an eye that never sleeps,  
 Nor misses aught that comes within its range.  
 It is his Highness' foot ; thou must away,  
 With swiftest step impelled ; farewell, my own !

*Charles.*—My wife, to-day farewell !

[*They embrace. Exit Charles.*]

[*Nora moving towards the Palace sees that she cannot escape meeting the Protector, and therefore retreats.*]

*Nora*.—He comes this way ; 'tis not his usual course.

And looks around, as though he did expect

Some hidden foe he is prepared to meet.

I must play hide and seek, or rather hide.

[*She conceals herself under a lilac or cypress tree.*]

*Cromwell*. [*Passing in full armour, and guardedly.*]

There is a saying culled from Holy Writ,

Which my good father's dying breath did bear

To my quick ear, and left it there for good ;—

“Let him who thinketh that he standeth take heed lest he fall !”

I stand and I take heed. The news I have

Warns me to-day some traitor lies in wait

To cross his sword with mine. I court the traitor ;

Yet find him not. It is a phantasy,

Begotten of my guilt ; my grievous guilt.

Once round the beatagain and then to sleep,

If sleep will kindly come to such as me.

[*Exit Cromwell sadly and watchfully.*]

*Enter Leonine armed and masked, and passing Nora, who is still concealed.*

*Leonine*. [*Aside*].—Now then, my weary soul thou art repaid.

Vengeance, hold back till prudence beckons thee.

He enters yonder close set avenue ;

I'll meet him there, and ere a guard shall rise

Or an alarm be breathed ; in drachms of blood

And inches of my sword I'll measure him, [*Draws*]

Or he shall measure me. Thou patron saint

Of noble men, Saint George ! be thou with me !

And oh ! my King, my holy martyred King !

Let me remember thee with my whole soul,

So that thy thousand sufferings on my heart,

My hand may strike as doth become my task.



[*He is about to advance intrepidly, when Nora, who mistakes him for her lover, rushes forward, throws herself before him, and clings to him.*]

Nora.—Charles! Charles! is this thy boasted honesty,  
That thou should'st lead me thus but to betray  
The friends who fostered me? I cry aloud  
Alarm! alarm! alarm! guards! treason! treason!  
Hark you, they move, and I will cling to thee  
Till he is safely hedged with faithful men.

[*Noise of guards approaching.*]

Now fly and save thyself, there yet is time.

[*She releases her hold and falls.*]

Leonine.—Thwarted at last; the fiend hath a charmed life.

[*To Nora at his feet.*]

Woman, wert thou a man, my sword were stained  
With blood I sought not. [*Aside.*] It was well I laid  
A second plan to gain a safe retreat.  
Now through the gates a rat could not escape.

[*Exit Leonine rapidly.*]

Nora. [*Rising.*—Thank heaven it was not Charles, t'was not his voice.  
Alarm! alarm! Guards to the rescue, come.  
Close up the avenue, my Lord is there!  
Surround my Lord, a traitor seeks his life;  
Alarm! alarm! alarm!

[*Rachel and guards rush in and disperse in search. Lights appear in the Palace Windows. Scene closes.*]

SCENE II.—A CORRIDOR OF THE PALACE. NOISE OF MOVEMENT OF SOLDIERS HEARD IN THE DISTANCE.

*Enter Lady Claypole and Mrs. Buckthorn.*

Mrs. Buckthorn.—Do not go further, Lady, 'tis not safe.

Lady Claypole.—Oh! I must know the worst. This state of doubt  
Is worse than worst of knowledge, worse than death.  
What did she tell me?

Mrs. Buckthorn.—Who, my Lady?

*Lady Claypole.*—Nora; what did she say? She rushed into my room and waked me from such a dream of bliss, and declared, she confessed: said her lover, one Charles Harfleur, and she did meet in the garden, and he did depart. And then a traitor armed did come to take my father's life, and she called alarm, and,—am I not in a dream? No, No. This fading noise tells me the reality. [*To Mrs. Buckthorn.*] Know you nothing, my good soul? Look at me! am I asleep even now? Know you nothing more, indeed, nothing more?

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—I only know, my Lady, that my Joshua did waken me in getting his sword which I had put under the pillow, because of his rashness, and that he did fly away wearing a coat of mail, and saying, afore I could catch him, he was to the defence of his Highness; whereupon I did rise, and following the noise, did meet your Ladyship. See, my Lady, here comes Joshua armed cap-and-pie.

*Enter Josh., carrying a mask, breast-plate, and sword.*

*Lady Claypole.*—My father?

*Josh.*—Safe, your Highness, as ever; not a hair of his head an-injured. Indeed, we did so surround him, Smite'em and all of us, with our swords drawn, that the traitor had no chance.

*Lady Claypole.*—Was he an armed man?

*Josh.*—Double armed, your Ladyship. His sword and mask and breast-plate I found, and Smite'em has him. They will try him off hand.

*Lady Claypole.* [*Aside.*]—And more blood: it sickens me to the death!

*Enter Nora.*

*Nora.*—Oh! my Lady, my Lady, I have sought you again everywhere. Oh! come, pray come, to help me: they have my life in their hands, more than my own life indeed, indeed; they have my lover, and he is not guilty.

*Josh.*—But his sword and mask and breast-plate are found; here they are.

*Nora.*—My lover had no sword, no mask, and no breast-plate save his honesty: I saw the assassin, clung to him, then heard him speak, and thereby knew the voice was strange, and not the voice of Charles Harfleur. Oh! save him, save him. Unite to help me all.

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—It brings over me the cold presbyterians.

*Nora.*—We were betrothed!

*Mrs. Buckthorn.*—Oh dear! how sad, how sad; indeed how sad! I feel for her as none but a woman betrothed, or more than betrothed can feel. [*Weeps.*] What if I were in her place. What should I do without my Joshua? [*Aside.*] Nobody would marry me again. [*Weeps.*]

*Lady Claypole.*—*Mrs. Buckthorn*, let us to *Nora*. The poor child is faint; let us help her away. Whatever her folly may have been, and we none of us are free from folly, she, by her courage, did save our father from peril; perchance too, her woman's ear may have been true. *Joshua Buckthorn*, see you as best you can, and at once, to save the youth, by my commission. *Nora*, my child, despair not but come.

[*Exit Lady Claypole and Mrs Buckthorn, leading Nora.*]

*Josh.*—Of all unprovoked and timeless bothers under the canopy, as my Lord says, this is one. Says his Highness to me to day, *Joshua*, I beg his pardon, Honourable *Joshua*, says he, I meant what I said about that knighthood; thou wilt be Sir *Joshua* to night, says he, when the company come if thou hast but a sword ready; which means, says I to myself, for I didn't even name it to the dear soul, *Mrs B* to night, before she goes to bed, will be my Lady. A lady of title for a sleeping partner *Joshua*, says I, also to myself, isn't a thing, says I, *Joshua*, I beg pardon, Sir *Joshua*, to be sneezed at, Sir *Joshua*. Certainly not, I replies courteously. And now, if this accursed execution shall come off, my Lord will speak to nobody for six weeks, and *Mrs B.* may be dead by that time or a thousand catastrophes may occur. Moreover, I like the youth under trial, he hath discernment beyond his octaves. And, lastly, as the Reverends say, if he should not be the right man? Oh, horror! think of one gentleman losing his knighthood and another his head, and both innocent. T'were enough to bring down a judgment on the whole nation. On public grounds I must stop it. Cudgel thy wit, Sir *Joshua*, it must be stopped. How? Dost thou say how? Seize a principle, Sir, gain time. Good, Sir *Joshua*, good. If thou could'st gain enough of time, *Charles*

Harfleur did live to the age of Methusaleh. Get then, Sir Joshua, whatever time thou can'st, and in the run of accidents thou mayest win even on an hour. Good, Sir, I say good! Clever!

[*Exit. Scene closes.*]

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SCENE III.—THE AUDIENCE ROOM OF CROMWELL.

THE SAME SCENE AS IN ACT II.

*Cromwell.* [*Alone.*—] Twice saved!  
 Saved from the assassin's hand: saved from myself.  
 Do I mistrust again that I am saved  
 By special power; to do the special work  
 Laid out for me before the hills were laid,  
 Or the earth took her form from out the void?  
 No! I mistrust no more: but boldly cry,  
 Father, I thank thee, and obey thy voice.  
 I will do justice: mercy I will love,  
 And humbly follow thee in all my ways.

*Enter Joshua Buckthorn.*

*Josh.*—My Lord, your Highness, may your servant ask a favour?

*Cromwell.*—In truth, Joshua, I have known thee do little else since I made a man of thee.

*Josh.*—And indeed, my Lord, have I not done my service, in return, manly?

*Cromwell.*—Oh fair, fair! but what is the favour?

*Josh.*—My Lord, I would intercede for the prisoner,—the youth Charles Harfleur.

*Cromwell.*—Oh! the sorry villain.

*Josh.*—Indeed, my Lord, I have met the youth, and beshrew me, he hath, methinks, less vice than be'est imputed to him.

*Cromwell.*—Adzacks, he sought my life; if that be not vice, tell me sirrah, what is vice? Thou poisonous egg, tell me what is vice, I say? I suppose thou would'st plead next to save him from the headsman?

*Josh.*—Not so, my Lord, I would plead only that the headsman have him not unjustly. Things are or are not as we see them, my Lord. Take now this house: on a hill five miles off 'twere a small affair, yet when in it 'tis a large place.



*Cromwell.*—Joshua, thy wit is the saving clause of thy idiotcy. Doctor Sydenham did tell me t'other day that in Galen 'twas said, the wit of a man may be told from the shape of his head. I wonder what could be told of thine?

*Josh.*—Nay, I heed not what Doctor Sydenham should say of my pate, my Lord; though a man of discretion would, I doubt me not, cede it to be a noble protruberance. But, my Lord, about this youth. I ask not for his pardon.

*Cromwell.*—What else then, Buckshead?

*Josh.*—My Lord, I would simply say, that this young man having been a lover of Miss Nora I have gauged him, my Lord, afore this, and by my sacred honour I believe, that though he may know something of plots and of conspiracies he be rather an instrument, or tool, than an actor himself. Therefore, I merely pray you, my Lord, to see the young man ere he goeth to the block.

*Cromwell.*—I object not to that; indeed, I will see him before I sign his death warrant.

*Josh.* [*Aside.*]—That be the gain of one hour any ways. Joshua Buckthorn, thou wert born to have thy humour. Sweet Letitia, Honourable Letitia, thou shalt yet be my Lady Buckthorn. [*Exit Josh.*]

*Enter Smite'em bringing a Death Warrant.*

*Cromwell.*—Captain Colman, thy faithful promptitude deserveth our thanks. What bringest thou?

*Smite'em.*—The warrant, General, for execution at nine of the morn.

*Cromwell.*—'Tis short time enough.

*Smite'em.*—More time than he would have given thee, General.

*Cromwell.*—May be, may be; but art sure thou hast the right man?

*Smite'em.*—Sartain as sin, General; we caught him up a tree. The council of officers have tried him and found him guilty. Trees don't answer twice for hiding, General. I like that.

*Cromwell.*—Leave the warrant, Smite'em; keep good guard, and fetch the youth, at once, to me.

*Smite'em.*—Head on shoulders an all?

*Cromwell.*—All. I would question him.

*Smite'em.*—Yea verily. [*Aside.*] I hate that.

[*Exit.*]

*Cromwell.* [*Taking up warrant.*]—

Thou thing of blood, I hate thee : from my soul  
 Innermost, deepest, holiest, I hate thee.  
 Thou art an instrument which must in time  
 Go where thou sendest others, to the death.  
 Thou art an useless thing, dread as thou seem'st.  
 The wily coward manages to slip thee,  
 The brave man scorns thee, as I did myself  
 When I was young and saw thee straight a-head.  
 When once I signed an instrument like thee,  
 Dreadful necessity ! thou wrenched from me  
 The kingly sceptre my dread sword had won.  
 Thou double-edged tool : thou frozen snake  
 Biting the breast that warms thee : I abhor  
 Thy loathsomeness ; yet cannot cast thee out.

[*Noise of a guard approaching, and voice of Charles Harfleur,*  
*singing as they advance.*]

*Charles.*—He may rule, if he likes,  
 With his axes and pikes,  
 His swords and his artillerie ;  
 But this is my faith ;  
 My inward man saith,  
 He cannot kill me.  
 For immortal am I, and who says I shall die  
 Tells a lie, tells a lie, tells a lie.

He may cut off my head ;  
 Nay he will, it is said,  
 And hang up my limbs on a tree ;  
 I laugh at his block,  
 His sharp axe I mock,  
 He cannot kill me.  
 For immortal am I, &c.

*Cromwell.* [*Listening.*]—That is very true.

*Charles.*—He may reign, if he can,  
 Till he sends ev'ry man  
 To the scaffold, who would be free ;  
 He may kill a slave,  
 He can't kill the brave,  
 He cannot kill me.  
 For immortal am I, &c.

*Cromwell.*—True, very true.

*Mr Gallie copied  
 with music for the  
 song.*

*Charles.*—The mightiest of men!  
 All his might cannot pen  
 The spirit of true libertie;  
           He cuts off her head,  
           She reigns in his stead.  
           He cannot kill me.  
 For immortal am I, &c.

*Cromwell.*—Ghostly true, yea, certain truth it is.  
 I cannot kill him, even if I would.

*Enter Rachel.*

*Rachel.*—I come to strengthen thee in thy dread task.  
 Falter not, Cromwell, more than crowned king.

*Cromwell.*—Would'st thou not bend to mercy?

*Rachel.*—Justice is first for thee: mercy remains  
 For higher power than thine; it thou may'st love  
 With all thy heart, but justice thou must do.  
 Mercy to one may be unjust to all;  
 Justice to one is justice unto all.  
 I strengthen thee for justice.

*Enter Guards leading Charles Harfleur.*

*Cromwell.*—Prisoner! our court condemns thee to thy death,  
 For that thou would'st have sent us to our death  
 And plunged this nation into blood again.  
 We bear no malice towards thee and would know  
 What we to thee have done; that if there be  
 A reason for thy deeds, it may be turned  
 To mercy towards thee.

*Charles.*—'Twere vain to reason now. Vain to protest  
 Malice I never knew. Vain to protest  
 I sought not to take life. Vain to protest  
 I did but seek to steal a life away,  
 To make it happier. Vain to protest  
 That my worst crime was reckless confidence,  
 In men I trusted; whose designs and aims  
 Now clear as day, were through my blindness dark.  
 I stand to suffer; and were mine alone  
 The suffering soul, I were, indeed, content.

*Cromwell.* [*Aside.*—His voice is firm, and beareth no deceit  
Even to me. [*To Rachel*] Rachel, our heart inclines  
Strongly to mercy.

*Rachel.*—Do justice!

*Cromwell.*—Were this thy long lost boy, what then would'st thou?  
Were justice still the cry?

*Rachel.* [*Aside.*—The shaft goes home. Can he indeed be mine?  
His age would do, his form is as I dream it.

It might be he. A murderer! No! it is not.

Or if it be, I'll know him not in life.

[*To Cromwell*] When Abraham had command to take his son,  
His innocent, and lay him on the pyre,  
He raised no murmur, but forthwith obeyed.

Think'st thou, if this were even as thou say'st,

I have less faith than father Abraham?

Or more than he deserved, deserve of Heaven?

No, no! the covenant is just and true;

Keep thou the holy covenant. Do right.

*Smite'em.*—That's sound doctrine. I like that.

*Cromwell.* [*To Charles.*—Our heart doth bleed for thee; yet we  
should err,

To save thee, as thou stand'st, with no defence.

*Charles.*—I stand to suffer. Haste! Make haste! make haste!

*Cromwell.*—Thou dost elect thy fate. God pity thee. [*Signing warrant*]  
The ink is blood. Oh, take it from my sight.

*Charles.*—Make haste! make haste! with death upon my lips

I do forgive you all: and wish you all

At your last hour, the peace I leave with you.

*Smite'em.* [*To guards.*—Close round the prisoner. March!

*Enter Josh. Buckthorn, Mrs. Buckthorn and Nora, in great  
excitement.*

*Josh.*—Hold! hold! my Lord, stop! stop the execution.

You send the wrong man to the block, my Lord!

The Guards do bring another, who hath come

And given up himself: stop! stop, I pray.

*Nora.* [*Rushing to feet of Cromwell.*—Oh, call them back, my  
Lord! indeed 'tis true.

Hark you! the tramp of feet, they come! they come!



*Cromwell.* [*To Smite'em*]—Halt there and bring the prisoner back to us.

[*Smite'em* returns with *Charles*: at the same time the second body of Guards bring in *Leonine*. Enter also at the same time *Herbert Lee* who retires to a window at back of stage.]

*Cromwell.* [*To the Guards who have newly entered with Leonine.*]—

Who is this man?

*Leonine.*—I answer for myself. I am the man  
Who doth deserve the scaffold; if desert  
Doth follow the attempt to measure steel,  
Fairly and freely, with the Lord Protector.  
I answer for myself: to take his place  
Who goeth there unjustly to his doom.  
I answer for myself: to save your souls  
The guilty sin of shedding guiltless blood.

*Smite'em.*—I like that. It partaketh of martyrdom.

*Cromwell.* [*Aside.*]—His speech bears out Sir Richard's last advice.  
[*To Leonine*].

How many days hast thou been in this town?

*Leonine.*—Five days.

*Cromwell.*—Under what name?

*Leonine.*—Leonine.

*Cromwell.*—And thy real name is?

*Leonine.*—Dunbar.

*Cromwell.*—The prisoner! what had he to do with thee?

*Leonine.*—No more than this. He off his head in love  
With yon fair maiden, [*pointing to Nora*] did obtain the ways  
Into the palace grounds, and knowing me  
Did tell me of his escapades, and make  
A confidant of me. I used him thus.  
And my offence most gross, but for my cause,  
I come to expiate; that he may live.

*Smite'em.*—Thou may'st button up, Captain Colman. Thy wow is wind.

*Cromwell.* [*To Leonine.*]—Thou speaketh truth, I have it all confirmed.  
[*To Smite'em.*]

Give back that bond of death and change the men.

*Has common place & union thy the best of  
the play - a poor 79 now. Think out a better*

[*Rachel, who has been intently and restlessly watching, makes suddenly towards Charles, and tears up his sleeve.*]

*Rachel*.—Found! found at last; my son, my only son!

[*She sinks to the ground.*]

*Nora*.—My brother!

*Cromwell*. [*To Nora.*].—No. Still thy lover. Thou art not her child.

Thy father, in a battle saved our life

To lose his own; and with his dying breath

Left thee, an orphan babe, to *Rachel's* care.

Let now her son assume his mother's place,

And be you both the children she deserves.

Raise her, and comfort her, and call her name.

[*Charles and Nora raise Rachel to a seat and both kneel.*]

*Nora*.—My more than mother, speak to me again!

*Charles*.—Mother! whose name so newly sadly beats

Upon mine ear! Dear mother! speak to me.

*Rachel*.—I hear a word t'would raise me from the grave.

Mother!

*Cromwell*.—Dunbar, come hither. [*Calls to Herbert.*]

Herbert, what gathering sound is that I hear?

*Herbert*. [*Looking out of window with a perspective glass.*].—

My Lord, the people hearing of your peril,

Gather in vengeful crowds before the gates.

Now, my Lord Fleetwood, rides into their midst,

Takes off his cap and tells your Lordship's safety.

They bare their heads: and see! the abbey ringers

Race like the wind to give a joyous peal.

*Cromwell*.—The people love too well: open each gate

And let them to me, that my voice may join

With their's in thankfulness. [*Exit Herbert by window.*]

[*To Dunbar.*]. Dunbar! if he thou servest had a breath

Of thy nobility, with my own hand

I would give back to him his father's crown.

To thee, brave boy,

Asking no pledge from thee, I give thy life

And perfect freedom. Soldiers, set him free.

*Leonine.* [*Kneeling*].—My Lord, in honour's cause, the life you give,  
Is yours again. I would to noble Blake  
Offer my sword.

*Cromwell.*—That compact we will seal with much delight.

*Josh.* [*Aside*].—There basks my Lady, beauty of the court.  
She fans herself; she little thinks, how soon  
A belted knight will woo her to his couch.  
Clever! Sir Joshua, very, very clever.

*Re-enter Herbert.*

*Herbert.*—My Lord, the crowds do pour in like a tide.

*Cromwell.*—Let them surge in! Cromwell would only live  
To be the crest upon the people's wave.  
Let them surge in! Cromwell can only die  
When they shall cease to strive for liberty,  
Strong as the winds and boundless as the sea.

[*The crowds approach towards window with loud hurrahs and cries of*  
“*Long live the Lord Protector.*” *The Abbey bells peal out merrily.*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

\* Shakspeare Dinner, \*

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Words by Benjamin Ward Richardson.

Bard of Avon ! speechless, breathless !  
Dust of dust, in Mother Earth.  
Bard of Avon ! reachless, deathless !  
Every day renews thy birth.













